

THE CLASH OF CULTURES ON THE MEDIEVAL BALTIC FRONTIER



Edited by
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The Clash of Cultures on the Medieval Baltic Frontier

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Alan V. Murray

A Note on Names

The historical names of places, regions and physical features in the eastern Baltic region have undergone numerous changes between the Middle Ages and the post-Soviet era. The solution adopted in this book is that, where they exist, English forms have been used for places (i.e. towns, villages and other settlements) and physical features; otherwise names are given in the forms that predominate in historical scholarship dealing with the Middle Ages; these tend to be in the languages of the powers that controlled the areas in question at the time, that is German in Prussia, Livonia and Pomerania, and Swedish in Finland. Where these forms differ from the modern names (which applies in the majority of cases), the corresponding forms are given in parentheses on their first occurrence.

The names of medieval countries and regions are a greater problem. Here the forms that predominate in scholarship tend to be German, while the modern forms (in Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish etc.) are probably unfamiliar to the majority of English-speaking readers. The solution adopted is to give names in English forms where these exist, or in Latin (or slightly anglicized Latin) forms. Thus, the book uses Vironia rather than German *Wierland* or Estonian *Virumaa*, and Curonia rather than German *Kurland* or Latvian *Kurzeme*. The district around Reval (mod. Tallinn, Estonia) is designated as Revalia in order to distinguish it from the town. A comparative table of different modern equivalents of the most important placenames and regional names is given at pp. xix–xx.

An important question of translation relates to two different categories of inhabitants of medieval Livonia. Although the two are not distinguished in some works of scholarship (notably Brundage's translation of the chronicle of Henry of Livonia), it seems useful to maintain the distinction between 'Livs' (Lat. *Lyvones*), the Finnic-speaking tribe that inhabited the core of what later became the Christianized territory of Livonia, and 'Livonians' (Lat. *Lyvonenses*), which is used to designate the entire population, both native and Western, of the territory.

In the case of personal names, names of individuals from the countries of northern Europe (the Baltic countries, Germany, Russia and Scandinavia) are usually given in the modern forms of their own languages. For individuals originating elsewhere, the forms used are those judged to be most familiar to English-speaking readers.

Modern Equivalents of Place-names and Regional Names

English/German/Swedish	Estonian	Finnish	Russian
Åbo (Sw.)		Turku	
Dorpat (Ger.)	Tartu		
Düna (Ger.) ¹	Väina		Dvina
Fellin (Ger.)	Viljandi		
Harria (Ger. Harrien)	Harjumaa		
Izhoria/Ingria (Ger. Ingrien)			Izhora
Jerwia (Ger. Jerwien)	Järvamaa		
Keksholm (Sw.)		Käkisalmi	Priozërsk
Königsberg (Ger.)			Kaliningrad
Nöteborg (Sw.)		Pähkinäsaari	Orekhov ²
Odenpäh (Ger.)	Otepää		
Ösel (Ger.)	Saaremaa		
(Lake) Peipus	Peipsi järv		Chudskoe ozero
Reval (Ger.)	Tallinn		
Saccala	Sakala		
Sontagana (Ger.)	Soontagana		
Tavastia		Häme	Yam
Tavastehus (Sw.)		Hämeenlinna	
Ugaunia (Ger. Ugaunien)	Ugandi		
Viborg (Sw.)		Viipuri	Vyborg
Vironia (Ger. Wierland)	Virumaa		
Warbola (Ger.)	Varbola		
Wesenberg (Ger.)	Rakvere		
Wiek (Ger.)	Läänemaa		

¹ Latvian Daugava.

² Now Shlissel'burg.

English/German	Latvian	Lithuanian	Polish
Curonia (Ger. Kurland) ³	Kurzeme	Kuršas	Kurlandia
Danzig (Ger.)			Gdańsk
Gerzike (Ger.)	Jersika		
Kukenois/Kokenhusen (Ger.)	Koknese		
Kulm (Ger.)			Chełmno
Marienburg (Ger.)			Malbork
Riga (Ger.)	Rīga		
Sambia (Ger. Samland)		Semba	Sambia
Samogitia	Žemaitija	Žemaitija	
Semgallia (Ger. Semgallien)	Zemgale	Žiemgala	
Tannenberg (Ger.)		Žalgiris	Grunwald/ Stębark
Üxküll (Ger.)	Ikšķile		
Wenden (Ger.)	Cēsis		
Vilnius (Ger. Wilna)		Vilnius	Wilno

³ Sometimes also called Courland in older scholarship.

Abbreviations

BNF	Bibliothèque nationale de France (Paris)
Dan.	Danish
Eng.	English
Est.	Estonian
Finn.	Finnish
Ger.	German
<i>JBS</i>	<i>Journal of Baltic Studies</i>
Lat.	Latin
Latv.	Latvian
Lith.	Lithuanian
<i>LUB</i>	<i>Liv-, Esth- und Curländisches Urkundenbuch</i> , ed. Friedrich Georg von Bunge et al., 12 vols in 2 series (Reval, 1853–1914)
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica
MGH SS	Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores in folio
MHG	Middle High German
MLG	Middle Low German
MS	manuscript
mod.	modern (after place-names, denotes the present-day form in the official language of the country)
OFr	Old French
PL	Patrologia Cursus Completus. Series Latina, ed. J. P. Migne, 221 vols (Paris, 1844–64)
<i>PUB</i>	<i>Preußisches Urkundenbuch</i> , ed. Rudolf Philippi et al., 6 vols (Königsberg, 1882–2000)
Russ.	Russian
<i>SRP</i>	<i>Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum: Die Geschichtsquellen der preußischen Vorzeit bis zum Untergange der Ordensherrschaft</i> , ed. Theodor Hirsch, Max Töppen and Ernst Strehlke, 5 vols (Leipzig, 1861–74)
Sw.	Swedish
<i>ZfO</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Ostforschung</i> (later <i>Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropaforschung</i>)



Map 1 The Baltic region



Map 2 Livonia and its neighbours



Map 3 Finland

Introduction

Alan V. Murray

The conquest and conversion of the lands on the southern and eastern shores of the Baltic Sea by Germans, Danes and Swedes from around 1150 to 1300 represented not only a confrontation between the Christianity of the conquerors and the diverse pagan beliefs of the native peoples. The crusaders, settlers, military orders and ecclesiastical authorities which established Christian control of Pomerania, Finland, Livonia and Prussia brought with them an alien culture, which was manifested in the arrival of diverse new institutions, artefacts and practices.¹ The gulf in technological culture and capability between Westerners and the indigenous peoples was most dramatically illustrated by the actual process of conquest. Superior equipment, such as high-quality armour, crossbows, siege machinery and warhorses, and fortifications built at first from wood and later from stone or brick, gave the invaders a huge advantage in both offensive and defensive contexts that offset their numerical inferiority.² A similar technological disparity can be seen at sea. Up to the time of the conquest certain maritime tribes among the Estonians and Curonians had been able to mount raids far across the Baltic Sea against the coast of Scandinavia, and even in the early thirteenth century they were able to attack Christian shipping and threaten the most important Christian settlement, Riga. Yet in the long run, the swift but small raiding ships of the

¹ For general studies available in English on these events, see especially: Robert Bartlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change, 950–1350* (London, 1993); Nils Blomkvist, *The Discovery of the Baltic: The Reception of a Catholic World-System in the European North (AD 1075–1225)* (Leiden, 2004); Eric Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades: The Baltic and the Catholic Frontier, 1100–1525* (London, 1980), 2nd edn (London, 1997); Sven Ekdahl, 'Crusades and Colonisation in the Baltic', in *Palgrave Advances in the Crusades*, ed. Helen J. Nicholson (Basingstoke, 2005), pp. 172–203; William Urban, *The Baltic Crusade* (DeKalb, 1975), 2nd edn (Chicago, 1994), as well as the select bibliography in the present volume.

² On crusaders' advantages in military technology, see especially Friedrich Benninghoven, *Der Orden der Schwertbrüder: Fratres Milicie Christi de Livonia* (Köln, 1965); Benninghoven, 'Zur Technik spätmittelalterlicher Feldzüge im Ostbaltikum', *ZfO* 19 (1970), 631–51; Sven Ekdahl, 'Das Pferd und seine Rolle im Kriegswesen des Deutschen Ordens', in *Das Kriegswesen der Ritterorden im Mittelalter*, ed. Zenon Hubert Nowak (Toruń, 1991), pp. 25–47; Ekdahl, 'Horses and Crossbows: Two Important Warfare Advantages of the Teutonic Order in Prussia', in *The Military Orders 2: Welfare and Warfare*, ed. Helen Nicholson (Aldershot, 1998), pp. 119–51; Evalds Mugurēvics, 'Die militärische Tätigkeit des Schwertbrüderordens (1201–1236)', in *Das Kriegswesen der Ritterorden im Mittelalter*, pp. 125–32; William Urban, *The Teutonic Knights: A Military History* (London, 2003).

indigenous peoples could not compete with the Western mercantile interests or the growing carrying capacity of the large vessels that brought crusaders, settlers and materiel from Lübeck and elsewhere to launch the attacks that finally extinguished the pagan naval bases.³

The main purpose of the Baltic Crusades was to bring about the acceptance of Christianity by the Slavs, Prussians, Livs, Letts, Lithuanians, Estonians, Finns and other peoples who inhabited the farther Baltic shores. The arrival of a new faith, whether this was accepted voluntarily, or in far more cases, imposed by coercion, necessarily brought about fundamental changes to the religious practices of the subject peoples: acceptance of baptism, attendance at religious services, payment of tithes, and abstention from pagan practices such as the worship of spirits and cremation of the dead. Yet for newly baptized populations, the acceptance of Christianity also entailed a whole series of changes in the organization and practice of political and social life, since it meant acceptance of the government and leadership of alien elites, who organized the conquered lands into new political and ecclesiastical structures; for their subjects, these changes brought many new obligations, such as taxes, labour duties and service in the military forces of the invaders.

The Christianized countries experienced different levels of Western immigration. In Finland, the incoming Swedes settled on the western and southern coasts, in both rural settlements as well as in towns such as Åbo (mod. Turku, Finland).⁴ In Livonia and Pomerania, the Germans and Danes tended to remain as urban populations, although they were also to be found garrisoning the many fortifications that grew up throughout the countryside. It was only Prussia that saw large-scale immigration from the West; by the later Middle Ages the majority in both town and country were the descendants of settlers from Germany, who had largely absorbed the Germanized remnants of the original population of Old Prussians and other tribes.⁵

Irrespective of the numbers of immigrants, the conquered landscapes were marked out as belonging to the realm of Western culture in a visible sense. Pagan sacred sites were mostly destroyed or abandoned, and the landscape was transformed

³ Silvio Melani, 'Guerra navale e anfibia sul Baltico nella cronaca duecentesca di Enrico di Lettonia', *Itineraria* 2 (2003), 107–35; Jan Bill, 'Scandinavian Warships and Naval Power in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries', in *War at Sea in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. John B. Hattendorf and Richard W. Unger (Woodbridge, 2003), pp. 35–51 (here 46–47); Mark R. Munzinger, 'The Profits of the Cross: Merchant Involvement in the Baltic Crusade (c. 1180–1230)', *Journal of Medieval History* 32 (2006), 163–85.

⁴ *När kom svenskarna till Finland?*, ed. Ann-Marie Ivars and Lena Huldén (Helsingfors, 2002).

⁵ Reinhard Wenskus, 'Der deutsche Orden und die nichtdeutsche Bevölkerung des Preußenlandes mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Siedlung', in *Die deutsche Ostsiedlung des Mittelalters als Problem der europäischen Geschichte*, ed. Walter Schlesinger (Sigmaringen, 1975), pp. 417–38.

by the construction of new towns, churches, monasteries and castles which served as ubiquitous, enduring visible monuments of the power of the Christian God and his forces. This function was further underlined by the names that many of them bore, after Christ, the Virgin Mary and even crusaders such as King Ottokar II of Bohemia: Christburg, Marienburg, Marienwerder, Königsberg. Indeed, the huge cultural changes were just as audible as they were visible, being marked by the German, Danish and Swedish languages of the crusaders and immigrants and the Latin that became the new medium of worship, while the church bells rang out into the landscape, offering reassurance to settlers and neophytes, and bringing unease and even fear to the pagans.⁶

The collision between Western and indigenous cultures, and the extent of conflict or accommodation between them, form the basis of study for the sixteen chapters collected in this volume. They were consciously brought together as a continuation of the research and debate that was published in the highly successful collection *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier*, which brought together essays based on papers given at meetings of the International Medieval Congress in Leeds in 1998 and 2000.⁷ That publication was intended to provide an impetus for new research and to increase the amount of English-language material available for teaching medieval Baltic studies by harnessing the new opportunities for dialogue and debate that appeared after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact.

The present collection includes a mixture of chapters based on papers from subsequent Leeds congresses as well as additional solicited contributions. It is encouraging that of the fourteen authors who contributed to *Crusade and Conversion*, six of them (from Canada, Denmark, Estonia and the United Kingdom) have provided new chapters for the present collection. In addition, it includes chapters by ten more scholars based in Denmark, Estonia, Finland, the U.S.A., the United Kingdom and Latvia; the three chapters from Latvian researchers are especially welcome, since they represent a constituency of expertise from which, for various reasons, it was not possible to secure contributions for *Crusade and Conversion*. While the main emphasis of the previous volume was on the theory, practice and effects of the crusades as experienced by both the crusading countries and institutions of northern Europe and the target countries of the eastern Baltic region, the scope of the present collection is broader.

⁶ See Alan V. Murray, 'Music and Cultural Conflict in the Christianization of Livonia, 1190–1290', *infra*, pp. 293–306.

⁷ *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, ed. Alan V. Murray (Aldershot, 2001). See also the reviews of the volume published in *History* 87 (2002), 417–18; *Slavonic and East European Journal* 80 (2002), 541–43; *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 97 (2002), 51–53; *ZfO* 51 (2002), 446–47; *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 54 (2003), 136; *Cristianesimo nella storia* 25 (2004), 254–56.

Part I, 'Culture and Identity', opens with two broad discussions by Marek Tamm and Eva Eihmane which provide a wider frame of reference for the collection as a whole. In his far-ranging survey, Tamm discusses how Western authors attempted to integrate the new unfolding information about the Baltic lands into existing frameworks of geographical and encyclopedic knowledge. He notes a predominantly negative tendency, which associated both lands and peoples with barbarism and idolatry, but argues that this reveals less about actual conditions than the cultural convictions of Western authors, who attempted to make Baltic geography intelligible for a Christian readership. Eihmane starts with a historiographical survey which illustrates how the clash between conquerors and indigenous peoples has been variously judged in the different intellectual climates prevailing from the medieval period through the Enlightenment to the nationalist and later Marxist historiography of more recent times. She goes on to examine the extent of unity and disunity among both crusaders and natives, concluding that while Christian powers and institutions in the Baltic region were sometimes rivals, they demonstrated an overall sense of common purpose that gave them great advantages over the indigenous peoples who lacked any real sense of a wider heathen identity that would have permitted a greater co-operative effort against the crusades.⁸ These are followed by two chapters by Andris Šnē and Philip Line which discuss how the societies and governance of southern Livonia and Finland respectively were transformed as a result of their conquests by Swedes and Germans.⁹ Both of these studies take a very long perspective in starting their considerations with the nature of pre-conquest societies and going on to assess the effects of the crusades over several centuries after the initial contact; they are especially valuable in synthesizing a great deal of recent research (especially the results of archaeological excavations) published in Finnish or Latvian and consequently less accessible to Western historians.

Part II, 'Crusade and Mission', offers two investigations of the ideas and practice of the crusades in the Baltic region as they were conceived and fashioned by two of the key institutions involved in these events, the papacy and the Teutonic Order. Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt develops aspects of her recent monograph on the papacy and the Baltic Crusades to offer a re-evaluation of the policies of Honorius III, a pontiff who in scholarship on the crusades has often stood in the shadow of his great predecessor Innocent III. She highlights how Honorius recalibrated papal policy to give a greater emphasis to support of missionary activities and protection of new Christian converts, a change which was reflected in his practice in issuing

⁸ Marek Tamm, 'A New World into Old Words: The Eastern Baltic Region and the Cultural Geography of Medieval Europe', *infra*, pp. 11–35; Eva Eihmane, 'The Baltic Crusades: A Clash of Two Identities', *infra*, pp. 37–52.

⁹ Andris Šnē, 'The Emergence of Livonia: The Transformations of Social and Political Structures in the Territory of Latvia during the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries', *infra*, pp. 53–70; Philip Line, 'Sweden's Conquest of Finland: A Clash of Cultures?', *infra*, pp. 73–99.

indulgences.¹⁰ Rasa Mažeika offers a fresh interpretation of the chronicle of Peter von Dusburg, our principal source for the conquest of Prussia, arguing that one of its main purposes was to provide the master and high officers of the Teutonic Order with legal arguments justifying both its past wars in Prussia and its more recent struggles against pagan Lithuania, at a time when there were prospects of accommodation between the papacy and the grand duchy, and the very *raison d'être* of the military religious orders was being increasingly questioned in the courts of Europe.¹¹

Part III, 'Converting Landscapes, Converting Peoples', gives four case studies on the actual practice and effects of conversion in two different parts of the southern and eastern Baltic world. It opens with complementary studies by Kurt Villads Jensen and Carsten Selch Jensen, two historians who have been in the forefront of the recent revival of Danish research on the crusades.¹² Their chapters explore the mechanics of the conversion process in the lands conquered by the Danish Crown from the Slavs of the Pomeranian coast, known to their enemies as Wends (Ger. *Wenden*, Dan. *Venderne*), and by the Germans and their convert allies in Livonia. Crusaders and missionaries did not limit their efforts to the conversion of tribes and individuals, but also attempted to transform a pagan landscape into a Christian one: this was partly achieved through the erection of churches and monasteries and acts of dedication, but it was equally important to eradicate pagan temples and holy sites, either by destroying them or by marking them in a way that gave them a new, Christian identity. Tiina Kala's contribution builds on her earlier broad overview of the processes by which the Baltic countries were brought within the political and ecclesiastical orbit of Western Christendom.¹³ In the present volume she provides a detailed investigation of the extent to which the Christian faith was accepted by the predominantly rural population of Livonia. She stresses that the

¹⁰ Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades, 1147–1254* (Leiden, 2007); Fonnesberg-Schmidt, 'Pope Honorius III and Mission and Crusades in the Baltic Region', *infra*, pp. 103–22. See also Fonnesberg-Schmidt, 'Pope Alexander III (1159–1181) and the Baltic Crusades', in *Medieval History Writing and Crusading Ideology*, ed. Tuomas M. S. Lehtonen and Kurt Villads Jensen (Helsinki, 2005), pp. 242–56.

¹¹ Rasa Mažeika, 'Violent Victims? Surprising Aspects of the Theory of Just War in the Chronicle of Peter von Dusburg', *infra*, pp. 124–37.

¹² Kurt Villads Jensen, 'Sacralization of the Landscape: Converting Trees and Measuring Land in the Danish Crusades against the Wends', *infra*, pp. 141–50; Carsten Selch Jensen, 'How to Convert a Landscape: Henry of Livonia and the *Chronicon Livoniae*', *infra*, pp. 151–68. See also John H. Lind, Carsten Selch Jensen, Kurt Villads Jensen and Ane L. Bysted, *Danske Korstog: Krig og mission i Østersøen* (København, 2004), to be published in English translation as *Jerusalem in the North: Denmark and the Baltic Crusades, 1100–1522* (Turnhout, 2009).

¹³ Tiina Kala, 'The Incorporation of the Northern Baltic Lands into the Western Christian World', in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, pp. 3–20; Kala, 'Rural Society and Religious Innovation: Acceptance and Rejection of Catholicism among the Native Inhabitants of Medieval Livonia', *infra*, pp. 169–90.

acceptance of baptism by the Livish, Lettish and Estonian peoples was often more of a political decision than a matter of religious conviction. In the post-conquest period, and indeed right up until the sixteenth century, the extent of Christian beliefs and practice must be laboriously pieced together from the diverse and often sketchy evidence available. This indicates a survival of pagan practices and, presumably, pagan convictions alongside the characteristics of the new faith that was often insufficiently or imperfectly propounded by bishops and parish priests. The final contribution to this section is provided by the art historian Anu Mänd, who investigates the cult of saints in Livonia as it was manifested in the choice of patrons of churches, monasteries and towns. She reveals the importance of the Virgin Mary, a status which evidently goes back to the dedication of the entire country to her in the time of Albert von Buxhövdén, bishop of Riga. Mänd also stresses the popularity of St Anne, St Nicholas and soldier saints, concluding that the Church of Livonia was very conservative in its attitudes, with – surprisingly – no veneration of the early bishops of Livonia and, indeed, relatively little veneration of any saints canonized during the conquest and post-conquest periods.¹⁴

Part IV, 'Catholicism and Orthodoxy', brings together three contrasting chapters dealing with the often problematic relationship between the Western secular and ecclesiastical authorities and the lands of the Rus', whose religious allegiance was to the Orthodox Church. It is still a matter of debate how far the Russian Orthodox Church was interested in trying to convert the various Finnic and Baltic peoples living in the pagan belt between the West and the Rus'. Torben K. Nielsen provides a close reading of the imagery in the chronicle of Henry of Livonia to show how the chronicler portrays the Russian Orthodox Church as a barren, false mother in contrast to the Catholic Church of Riga, which for him was the only true mother worthy of bringing the Christian faith to Livonia and Estonia.¹⁵ The crusades rapidly removed any real possibility of Orthodox missionary work in the lands conquered by Westerners and the Germans of Livonia and the Swedes in Finland soon went on the offensive against both pagans and Orthodox Christians of north-west Russia and Karelia with the aim of forcing them to accept the Catholic form of Christianity, topics which have been well studied in recent research.¹⁶ Michael

¹⁴ Anu Mänd, 'Saints' Cults in Medieval Livonia', *infra*, pp. 191–223.

¹⁵ Torben K. Nielsen, 'Sterile Monsters? Russians and the Orthodox Church in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia', *infra*, pp. 227–52.

¹⁶ Evgeniya L. Nazarova, 'The Crusades against Votians and Izhorians in the Thirteenth Century', in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, pp. 177–95; John H. Lind, 'Consequences of the Baltic Crusades in Target Areas: The Case of Karelia', in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, pp. 133–49; Lind, 'The Russian–Swedish Border According to the Peace Treaty of Nöteborg (Orekhovets – Pähkinälinna) and the Political Status of the Northern Part of Fennoscandia', *Mediaeval Scandinavia* 13 (2000), 100–117; Lind, 'Scandinavia Nemtsy and Repaganized Russians. The Expansion of the Latin West During the Baltic Crusades and its Confessional Repercussions', in *The Crusades and the Military Orders: Expanding the Frontiers of*

Paul offers a rather different view of the conflict from the perspective of the Russian world, investigating how Vasilii Kalika, archbishop of Novgorod, built the key fortress of Orekhov into a bulwark on the frontier to defend the Novgorodian Land and, in a wider sense, all of Orthodoxy, from the relentless onslaught of Swedish and German crusaders.¹⁷ By contrast, the final chapter in this section, by Anti Selart, reveals a surprising case of pragmatic co-existence by examining the legal and social basis of Russian Orthodox churches in Livonia, which were tolerated by those same Catholic ecclesiastical authorities which decried the Orthodox world as schismatic and often supported military action against it in word and deed.¹⁸

Part V, 'Warfare on the Baltic Frontier', deals with three aspects of conflict in its most basic sense. Alan Murray shows how the crusades brought alien musical instruments – from bells to warhorns, drums and fifes – which were deployed not only to bolster the morale and discipline of Christian forces, but also to unnerve their pagan opponents.¹⁹ Stephen Turnbull gives a detailed examination of some of the more conventional weapons that gave such an advantage to the crusaders, clarifying problems of interpretation of names given to various weapon types in the chronicle of Henry of Livonia.²⁰ Finally, Kaspars Kļaviņš investigates the circumstances in which the neophytes of Livonia fought on the side of the Christian conquerors. This study offers a corrective to any impression of a struggle between monolithic blocs of Christians and natives, since it shows how decisions by Livs and Letts to ally themselves to the crusaders were often driven by the desire to secure powerful allies against existing regional enemies such as Lithuanians and Russians.²¹

This collection does not claim to provide a comprehensive treatment of cultural conflict in the Baltic region. Rather, it shows how different approaches can be employed in exploring this subject, while drawing on a range of historiographical, literary, artistic, topographical and archaeological evidence. It is noticeable how alongside studies on Finland, Russia, Prussia and Pomerania, there is a marked concentration on Livonia. This is partially due to the recent activity of scholars in Estonia, Latvia and Denmark, but it is also an indication of our debt to a single medieval source, the chronicle of Henry of Livonia, and many of the papers show

Medieval Latin Christianity, ed. Zsolt Hunyadi and József Laszlovsky (Budapest, 2001), pp. 481–500; Anti Selart, 'Confessional Conflict and Political Co-Operation: Livonia and Russia in the Thirteenth Century', in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, pp. 151–76; Selart, *Livland und die Rus' im 13. Jahrhundert* (Köln, 2007).

¹⁷ Michael C. Paul, 'Archbishop Vasilii Kalika of Novgorod, the Fortress of Orekhov and the Defence of Orthodoxy', *infra*, pp. 253–71.

¹⁸ Anti Selart, 'Orthodox Churches in Medieval Livonia', *infra*, pp. 273–90.

¹⁹ Murray, 'Music and Cultural Conflict in the Christianization of Livonia, 1190–1290'.

²⁰ Stephen Turnbull, 'Crossbows or Catapults? The Identification of Siege Weaponry and Techniques in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia', *infra*, pp. 308–19.

²¹ Kaspars Kļaviņš, 'The Significance of the Local Baltic Peoples in the Defence of Livonia (Late Thirteenth–Sixteenth Centuries)', pp. 321–40.

how it can still reveal a great deal about the processes of crusade and conversion as well as about the mentalities of crusaders, neophytes and pagans alike. It is therefore particularly welcome that we can look forward soon to the publication of papers from a conference on this fascinating historian, held at Tallinn in 2008.²² That volume, like this one, is a sign of the rich and stimulating work currently being done in the field of medieval Baltic history.

²² *Crusading and Chronicle Writing on the Medieval Baltic Frontier: The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, ed. Carsten Selch Jensen, Linda Kaljundi and Marek Tamm (Aldershot, 2009).

PART I

Culture and Identity

Chapter 1

A New World into Old Words: The Eastern Baltic Region and the Cultural Geography of Medieval Europe

Marek Tamm

Introduction: Imagined Geographies

One of the results of the conquest and conversion of the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea in the thirteenth century was the need to integrate the conquered lands into European cultural geography and translate this new information into Latin learned discourse.¹ Borrowing the terminology of today's geographers we could define this need more abstractly as a task to appropriate the new space and transform it into territory. By 'territory', I mean a space domesticated by a community through the execution of power, in opposition to 'space' as something vague and indefinable.² 'Power territorializes', Kathy Lavezzo has recently written: 'it permeates, controls, and fashions space'.³

In this chapter I am mainly interested in the discursive aspect of this process of territorializing: how the textual mapping of the eastern Baltic region by Latin authors came about in the thirteenth century, and what kind of rhetorical and narrative techniques were employed to this end.⁴ I will also address the question of what kinds of cultural clashes we may witness in this mapping.⁵ In general, one has to

¹ This article was written with the support of grant no. 7129 awarded by the Estonian Science Foundation.

² See Piroska Nagy, 'La notion de *Christianitas* et la spatialisation du sacré au Xe siècle: un sermon d'Abbon de Saint-Germain', *Médiévales* 49 (2005), 121–40 (here 121–22).

³ Kathy Lavezzo, *Angels on the Edge of the World: Geography, Literature, and English Community, 1000–1534* (London, 2006), p. 1.

⁴ An inspiring analysis of the medieval textual mapping of Nordic countries was proposed recently by Lars Boje Mortensen, 'The Language of Geographical Description in Twelfth-Century Scandinavia', *Filologia Mediolatina* 12 (2005), 103–21. See also Martin Kaufhold, *Europas Norden im Mittelalter: Die Integration Skandinaviens in das christliche Europa (9.–13. Jh.)* (Darmstadt, 2001); Sverre Bagge, 'On the Far Edge of Dry Land: Scandinavian and European Culture in the Middle Ages', in *Scandinavia and Europe 800–1350. Contact, Conflict, and Coexistence*, ed. Jonathan Adams and Katherine Holman (Turnhout, 2004), pp. 355–69.

⁵ See, for comparison, John B. Friedman, 'Cultural Conflicts in Medieval World Maps', in *Implicit Understandings: Observing, Reporting, and Reflecting on the Encounters between Europeans and Other Peoples in the Early Modern Era*, ed. Stuart B. Schwartz

agree with Nils Blomkvist's recent assessment that cultural conflicts on the eastern Baltic frontier were the most notable of the High Middle Ages: 'As an ethnological experience, the penetration of the East Baltic countries was to be something very different from the earlier phases of the Europeanization process. On the far side of the sea the Westerners encountered communities which had had little or no previous influence from Western culture. Theirs were to be the most radical cultural encounters of the entire process of Europeanization on the Baltic Rim.'⁶

In many ways, the discursive angle is the only one a medievalist can choose in his work, since medieval geographical texts tend to convey cultural convictions and textual traditions rather than physical reality. Ruth Morse has put it successfully: 'Even when they (i.e. medieval historians and geographers) were eyewitnesses they seldom seem to have expected close *textual* attention.'⁷ In the Middle Ages, geographical description was primarily a textual exercise of an authoritative canon of theological doctrine. Medieval and early modern theory of knowledge, as Anthony Pagden has pointed out, 'claimed that the external world and all human life was legible, *secundum scripturam*'. Specifically, 'understanding the world [...] was dependent upon the interpretation of a determined canon of texts: the Bible, the Church Fathers, and a regularly contested although in practice restricted corpus of ancient writers'.⁸

Medieval geographical texts should therefore in general be considered as 'imagined geographies', to employ the expression coined by Edward Said.⁹ In this term, 'imagined' is used to mean not 'false' or 'fictional', but 'perceived'. It refers to the perception of space created through different texts or discourses. All landscapes are seen as being imagined; there is no 'real' geography with which the imagined ones can be compared. Thus we cannot have the hermeneutic satisfaction of stripping away the false representations to arrive at a secure sense of reality. In this chapter I shall not try to distinguish between true and false representations but

(Cambridge, 1994), pp. 64–95; Christopher Ivic, 'Incorporating Ireland: Cultural Conflict in Raphael Holinshed's *Irish Chronicles*', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 23 (1999), 473–98.

⁶ Nils Blomkvist, *The Discovery of the Baltic. The Reception of a Catholic World-System in the European North (AD 1075–1225)* (Leiden, 2005), p. 170.

⁷ Ruth Morse, *Truth and Conventions in the Middle Ages: Rhetoric, Representation and Reality* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 106. See also the pertinent remark by Christopher Tyerman, *The Invention of the Crusades* (London, 1998), p. 99: 'Most medieval primary sources were exercises in interpreting reality, not describing it.'

⁸ Anthony Pagden, *European Encounters with the New World: From Renaissance to Romanticism* (New Haven, 1993), pp. 12, 52. See also Anthony Grafton (with April Shelford and Nancy Siraisi), *New Worlds, Ancient Texts. The Power of Tradition and the Shock of Discovery* (London, 1992).

⁹ See especially his influential *Orientalism* (New York, 1978). On the medievalist's uses of this book, see the special issue of *Medieval Encounters* 5/3 (1999).

to look at the nature of the representational practices that the Europeans carried with them to the eastern Baltic.

Expansion of the Habitable World

Thirteenth-century Europe witnessed a remarkable extension of the view of the habitable world. Many regions previously unknown or little known to Christianity were textually mapped and integrated into Western cultural geography.¹⁰ One of the indicators of this extension is the emergence of the eastern Baltic region in thirteenth-century geographical descriptions.¹¹ Together with the expansion of the crusading movement and missionary work to the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea, more and more descriptions of the region and its inhabitants appeared from the thirteenth century onwards, affording increasingly specific geographical knowledge and insightful testimony on the cultural clashes and compromises on the eastern Baltic frontier.

A quick glance at earlier traditions makes one conclude that descriptions of the eastern Baltic dating from before the thirteenth century clearly belong to the realm of geographical *mirabilia* and reflect most of all the textual circulation of mythical codes. One of the earliest surviving examples of this 'mythological phase' is an Old English text from the late ninth century, the so-called *Voyage of Wulfstan*, which is interpolated into the Old English translation of Orosius's *The Seven Books of History against the Pagans*. It is an Englishman's description of a journey across the Baltic Sea to Estonia and of the customs of the people found there. Arriving in Estonia, he finds many towns and a king in each. The local people drink mare's milk if they are wealthy and mead if they are slaves or poor folk. Wulfstan mostly pays attention to the burial customs of the local inhabitants, which he presents as a kind of contest, where the fastest rider inherits the most valuable part of the

¹⁰ See Patrick Gautier Dalché, 'Les savoirs géographiques en Méditerranée chrétienne (XIIIe siècle)', *Micrologus* 2 (1994), 75–99; Seymour Phillips, 'The Outer World of the European Middle Ages', in *Implicit Understandings*, pp. 23–63; J. R. S. Phillips, *The Medieval Expansion of Europe* (Oxford, 1998).

¹¹ See Jerzy Strzelczyk, 'Der Prozeß der Aktualisierung Polens und Osteuropas im Verständnis der gelehrten Kreise des 13. Jahrhunderts (mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Otia imperialia des Gervasius von Tilbury und der Ebstorfer Weltkarte)', in *Ein Weltbild vor Columbus: Die Ebstorfer Weltkarte. Interdisziplinäres Colloquium 1988*, ed. Hartmut Kugler (Weinheim, 1991), pp. 146–66; Patrick Gautier Dalché, 'Représentations géographiques de l'Europe (en particulier septentrionale, centrale et orientale) au Moyen Age'. Paper read at the conference 'Das alte und das neue Europa. Zu Grundfragen von Austauschprozessen zwischen den europäischen Großregionen in Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit', Warsaw, 26–28 October 2001. See also, for a longer-term perspective, Almut Bues, '"Die letst gegent und provintz der cristen", or where is the Baltic?', in *Zones of Fracture in Modern Europe: The Baltic Countries, the Balkans, and Northern Italy*, ed. Almut Bues (Wiesbaden, 2005), pp. 27–43.

heritage of the departed.¹² One of the latest commentators on Wulfstan's journey, Sealy Gilles, pointedly remarks that in describing Estonians he actually attributes to them modes of behaviour widespread in Old English poetry: 'Wulfstan's account of pagan customs persisting on the margins of European Christendom is reminiscent of the ancient customs of the English themselves.'¹³ In order to avoid straying even further from the Latin texts central to this study, I merely indicate the numerous mentions and descriptions of the eastern Baltic region in early Nordic sources.¹⁴

A somewhat more thorough overview of the region, in kind still a part of the 'mythological phase' of medieval cultural geography, is provided by Adam of Bremen in his *History of the Bishops of Hamburg-Bremen* (c. 1075–76). The fourth book of the *History*, the 'Description of the Islands of the North', is wholly an account of peoples and lands that lay about the Baltic Sea. Adam builds up his narrative around the missionary mandate, which explains his curiosity toward the more distant Baltic regions.¹⁵ Basing his geographical worldview on earlier textual authorities and the *mappaemundi* layout, Adam depicts the eastern Baltic region mainly as separate islands in the middle of the Baltic or 'Barbarian Sea' (Lat. *Mare barbarum*).¹⁶ Adam takes a closer look at three regions: Curonia,¹⁷

¹² *The Old English Orosius*, ed. Janet Bately (Oxford, 1980). Modern English translation, *The Anglo-Saxon World: An Anthology*, trans. Kevin Crossley-Holland (Oxford, 1999), pp. 67–68.

¹³ Sealy Gilles, 'Territorial Interpolations in the Old English Orosius', in *Text and Territory: Geographical Imagination in the European Middle Ages*, ed. Sylvia Tomasch and Sealy Gilles (Philadelphia, 1998), pp. 79–96 (here 90). See also recent discussion on Wulfstan's identity and authorship: Bengt Odenstedt, 'Who was Wulfstan? A New Theory of Othere's and Wulfstan's Voyages', *Studia Neophilologica* 66 (1994), 147–57; Julia Fernández Cuesta and Inmaculada Senra Silva, 'Othere and Wulfstan: One or Two Voyagers at the Court of King Alfred?', *Studia Neophilologica* 72 (2000), 18–23; Irmeli Valtonen, *The North in the Old English Orosius: A Geographical Narrative in Context* (Helsinki, 2008).

¹⁴ See Kristel Zilmer, *He Drowned in Holmr's Sea – His Cargo-Ship Drifted to the Sea-Bottom, Only Three Came Out Alive: Records and Representations of Baltic Traffic in the Viking Age and the Early Middle Ages in Early Nordic Sources* (Tartu, 2005).

¹⁵ See Volker Scior, *Das Eigene und das Fremde. Identität und Fremdheit in den Chroniken Adams von Bremen, Helmolds von Bosau und Arnold von Lübeck* (Berlin, 2002), pp. 29–137.

¹⁶ Adam of Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis Ecclesiae Pontificum* [later abbreviated as Adam of Bremen], ed. Bernhard Schmeidler, MGH *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi* 2 (Hannover, 1917), ch. I.60, p. 58. The notion of the Barbarian Sea occurs also later in Adam of Bremen, II.5, IV.1, IV.10, IV.20 (All translations from Latin are mine unless otherwise noted).

¹⁷ Adam of Bremen, ch. IV.16, p. 244: 'Of these islands the largest, the one called Courland [Curonia], takes eight days to traverse. The people, exceedingly bloodthirsty because of their stubborn devotion to idolatry, are shunned by everybody. Gold is very plentiful there, the horses are of the best; all the houses are full of pagan soothsayers,

Estonia¹⁸ and Sambia,¹⁹ adding to these descriptions additional information on the 'Land of Women' (Lat. *Terra feminarum*), where Amazons and Cynocephali live. At the end of his description he adds: 'In this sea there are also very many other islands, all infested by ferocious barbarians and for this reason avoided by navigators.'²⁰ Also partly belonging to the phase of 'mythological descriptions' are the turn-of-the-century descriptions by Saxo Grammaticus on some of the people of the eastern Baltic region in his *Gesta Danorum* (c. 1208), although the historian Paul Johansen has with some success tried to identify the historical sources of his notes.²¹

A change in the textual tradition came about in the early thirteenth century, culminating in the middle of the century, when the first more thorough Latin descriptions on the eastern Baltic region were completed. Naturally this textual production is directly linked to the Christianization process in this region, because one of the *raison d'être* of these geographical descriptions is to create authority and subordination. Not trying to present all the sources at this point, I merely mention the most important ones that up until today have not rated from historians the attention they deserve.

Besides the well-known *Chronica Slavorum* (c. 1210) of Arnold of Lübeck and *Chronicon Livoniae* (c. 1224–27) of Henry of Livonia, which first give an overview of Christianity reaching the eastern Baltic region,²² two mid-thirteenth-

diviners, and necromancers, who are even arrayed in a monastic habit.' The quotations in English are taken from Adam of Bremen, *History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen*, trans. Francis J. Tschan (New York, 1959).

¹⁸ Adam of Bremen, ch. IV.17, p. 244: 'It is not smaller that the one of which we have previously spoken [i.e. Curonia]. Its people, too, are utterly ignorant of the God of the Christians. They adore dragons and birds and also sacrifice to them live men whom they by from the merchants. These men are carefully inspected all over to see that they are without a bodily defect on account of which, they say, the dragons would reject them.'

¹⁹ Adam of Bremen, ch. IV.18, pp. 245–46: 'It is inhabited by the Sembi or Prussians, a most humane people, who go out to help those who are in peril at sea or who are attacked by pirates. Gold and silver they hold in very slight esteem. They have an abundance of strange furs, the odor of which has inoculated our world with the deadly poison of pride [...]. They take the meat of their draft animals for food and use their milk and blood as drink so freely that they are said to become intoxicated. These men are blue of color, ruddy of face, and long-haired. Living, moreover, in inaccessible swamps, they will not endure a master among them.'

²⁰ Adam of Bremen, IV.19, p. 246.

²¹ Paul Johansen, 'Saxo Grammaticus und das Ostbaltikum', *ZfO* 27 (1974), 623–39. See Saxo Grammaticus, *Gesta Danorum*, ed. Jørgen Olrik and Hans Raeder, 2 vols (København, 1931–57). A new edition was recently published by Karsten Friis-Jensen with Danish translation by Peter Zeeberg: Saxo Grammaticus, *Gesta danorum / Danmarkshistorien*, 2 vols (København, 2005).

²² See Linda Kaljundi, 'Waiting for the Barbarians: The Imagery, Dynamics and Functions of the Other in Northern German Missionary Chronicles, 11th – Early 13th Centuries. The *Gestae Hamaburgensis Ecclesiae Pontificum* of Adam of Bremen, *Chronica*

century Latin sources need to be highlighted, as they contain new geographical information and details on the history of religion in the region. These are the encyclopedia *De proprietatibus rerum* ('On the Properties of Things'), completed by the English Franciscan Bartholomaeus Anglicus around 1245, and an anonymous geographical tract entitled *Descriptiones terrarum* ('Descriptions of Lands') that was written about 1255. The fifteenth book of Bartholomaeus's encyclopedia, a true 'bestseller' in the Middle Ages and also the following centuries, is devoted in its entirety to describing the 'provinces' of the world and contains sections on six regions of the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea: Livonia, Lithuania, Sambia, Semgallia, Revalia and Vironia.²³ The sole manuscript of *Descriptiones terrarum* known to have been preserved emerged only in 1979, and researchers have not yet agreed on its author.²⁴ He was probably a member of a mendicant order and was active in Riga at the time of Archbishop Albert Suerbeer (d. 1273).²⁵ *Descriptiones terrarum* is probably a surviving fragment of a more sizeable work describing the origin and customs of the Mongols. In current form the manuscript contains only a casual overview of the regions of Eastern and Northern Europe, containing,

Slavorum of Helmold of Bosau, *Chronica Slavorum* of Arnold of Lübeck, and *Chronicon Livoniae* of Henry of Livonia' (unpublished M.A. dissertation, Tartu University, 2005).

²³ For a more detailed presentation, see Marek Tamm, 'Signes d'altérité. La représentation de la Baltique orientale dans le *De proprietatibus rerum* de Barthélemy l'Anglais (vers 1245)', in *Frontiers in the Middle Ages: Proceedings of the Third European Congress of the FIDEM (Jyväskylä, June 2003)*, ed. Outi Merisalo (Louvain-la-Neuve, 2006), pp. 147–70. The encyclopedia of Bartholomaeus has not yet been critically edited. In the following I use one of the oldest remaining manuscripts of the encyclopedia (late thirteenth century) that is kept in MS Paris, BNF, lat.16098; the article cited above contains a transcription of the chapters dealing with the eastern Baltic region.

²⁴ The geographical tract appears on the late thirteenth-century MS. Dublin, Trinity College, 347, folios 3r–4v. See Marvin L. Colker, *Trinity College Library Dublin. Descriptive Catalogue of the Mediaeval and Renaissance Latin Manuscripts*, 1 (Aldershot, 1991), no. 347, pp. 710–40.

²⁵ Marvin L. Colker, 'America Rediscovered in the Thirteenth Century?', *Speculum* 54 (1979), 712–26. For discussion on the authorship of *Descriptiones terrarum*, see Karol Gorski, 'The Author of the *Descriptiones Terrarum*: A New Source for the History of Eastern Europe', *Slavonic and East European Review* 61 (1983), 254–58; Jerzy Ochmański, 'Nieznany autor "Opisu krajów" z drugiej połowy XIII w. i jego wiadomości o Bałtach', *Lituanio-Slavica Posnaniensia. Studia Historica* 1 (1985), 107–14; Gunar Freibergs, 'The *Descriptiones Terrarum*: Its Date, Sources, Author and Purpose', in *Christianity in East Central Europe: Late Middle Ages. Proceedings of the Commission Internationale d'Histoire Ecclesiastique Comparée, Lublin 1996*, ed. Jerzy Kłoczowski, 2 vols (Lublin, 1999), 2: 180–201; Jarosław Wenta, 'Zu Gog und Magog. Einige Bemerkungen über die Verfasserschaft der "Descriptiones Terrarum"', *Etudes médiévales* 7 (2006), 331–39.

among other things, information on a dozen regions of the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea (Livonia, Lithuania, Samland, Curonia and others).²⁶

Mapping the Eastern Baltic Region in the Thirteenth Century

Before the mid-thirteenth century the Latin sources contain only very random and unsystematic information about the more precise location and inner structure of the eastern Baltic region. Our most thorough source from that period, Henry's *Chronicle of Livonia*, takes only a fleeting interest in the geography of the newly conquered territories. Since the spiritual centre of Henry's chronicle is located in Riga, the Lettish territories merit the most attention. Other regions come under the gaze of the author only in describing isolated missionary and military campaigns.

Even though in the first decades of the thirteenth century the English historian Gervase of Tilbury had expressed a deeper interest in Eastern Europe, his influential work *Otia imperialia* (c. 1214) does not yet mention a single eastern Baltic area.²⁷ However, we can find several on the Ebstorf map of the world attributed to Gervase of Tilbury, but more probably composed at the end of the thirteenth century by an unknown author.²⁸ On this largest recorded *mappamundi* the following eastern Baltic regions are mentioned: Semgallia (*Semigallia*), Curonia (*Curlant*), Sambia (*Sanelant*), Prussia (*Prucia*) and the town of Riga in Livonia (*Riga Livonie civitas*).²⁹

But the most thorough information about the region reached the learned audience of the West thanks to the encyclopedia of Bartholomaeus Anglicus, of which over two hundred manuscripts have survived. As stated before, Bartholomaeus introduces six provinces of the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea;

²⁶ See Evalds Mugurēvičs, 'Geographische Beschreibung "Descriptiones terrarum" und deren Informationsquellen über östbaltische Völker in der Mitte des 13. Jahrhunderts', in *Słowiańszczyzna w Europie Średniowiecznej*, ed. Zofia Kurnatowska, 2 vols (Wrocław, 1996), 1: 125–30; Marek Tamm, 'Uus allikas Liivimaa ristiusustamisest. Ida-Baltikumi kirjeldus *Descriptiones terrarum*'is', *Keel ja Kirjandus* 44 (2001), 872–84. See also Anti Selart, 'Die Bettelmönche im Ostseeraum zur Zeit des Erzbischofs Albert Suerbeer von Riga (Mitte des 13. Jahrhunderts)', *ZfO* 56 (2007), 475–99 (here 495–97).

²⁷ See Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia Imperialia: Recreation for an Emperor*, ed. and trans. S. E. Banks and J. W. Binns (Oxford, 2002).

²⁸ See Leonid S. Chekin, *Northern Eurasia in Medieval Cartography: Inventory, Text, Translation, and Commentary* (Turnhout, 2006), pp. 146–61.

²⁹ See Klaus Friedland, 'Ostsee und Osteuropa im Weltbild des 13. Jahrhunderts', in *Zwischen Christianisierung und Europäisierung: Beiträge zur Geschichte Osteuropas im Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit. Festschrift für Peter Nitsche zum 65. Geburtstag* (Stuttgart, 1998), pp. 17–21. See also Juhan Kreem, '... ultima germanorum & christianorum prouintia ... Outlines of the Image of Livonia in Maps from the Thirteenth to the Middle of the Sixteenth Century', in *Quotidianum Estonicum. Aspects of Daily Life in Medieval Estonia*, ed. Jüri Kivimäe and Juhan Kreem (Krems, 1996), pp. 14–25 (here 15).

but since the structure of the encyclopedia is alphabetical, his descriptions do not afford a good overview of the whole structure of the region.

Therefore, the first systematic mapping of the new region of Christendom is provided by the anonymous author of *Descriptiones terrarum* around 1255, although we cannot overestimate the influence of his descriptions, since of the whole work only one surviving manuscript from Ireland is known to us. The author of the description had travelled in the region and therefore usually gives us information that he himself had experienced. Leaving out the non-geographical information in its descriptions, what we are left with is the first general overview of the eastern Baltic region:

In the east, towards Russia, Yatvingia borders [Pomerania]. [...] In the north, Prussia is followed by Sambia, where the same language is spoken, more or less in the north it leads to the sea. [...] Next to Sambia lies Curonia that takes an abrupt turn to the north, in the south surrounded by the sea, just as in the west. But to the east lies trouble and misery, the land of pagans that is called Samogitia. [...] To the east from there lies Lithuania that borders Russia. [...] Curonia is followed by Livonia in the north. [...] Next to this land lies Estonia, that is more inclined towards the north, being situated under Arcturus. In the north this land also leads to the sea. In the west it is followed by Vironia.³⁰

Only four decades later this first geographical mapping of the eastern Baltic region was followed by the one given by the anonymous author of the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* (Ger. *Livländische Reimchronik*) written in Middle High German around 1290, who gives, in the words of the first bishop of Livonia, Meinhard, an overview of peoples and their locations:

The first of them are called Lithuanians, arrogant heathens whose armies do much damage to pure Christianity; this is because of their widespread power. Near them are heathens who have great strength in numbers; they are called Semgallians, and they harry the lands around them. Whoever cannot match them in strength will be placed in peril. The Selonians are also heathens and blind to all virtues. They have many idols, and do evil deeds beyond number. Beyond them is another land, that of the Letts. These heathens have strange customs:

³⁰ Colker, 'America Rediscovered in the Thirteenth Century?', pp. 721–23: *Ab oriente autem uersus Russiam eidem Ietwesya est coniuncta. [...] Prusciam sequitur Zambia ad aquilonem eiusdem lingue maritima quasi a parte aquilonis. [...] Zambie iungitur Curlandia, que magis flectitur ad aquilonem, circumdata mari a parte austri et etiam occidentis. In orientali uero plaga posita est terra paganorum que Samoita appellatur. [...] Hec habet etiam ad orientem conterminam Ruscie terram Lectauię. [...] [C]urlandiam sequitur Liunia ad aquilonem [...] Huic terre iungitur Hestonia magis declinans ad aquilonem, posta sub arthuro. Hec etiam est maritima ex parte meridiana. Hanc sequitur Bironia a parte occidentis.*

they live together for security, but they tend separate farms in the forest. Their womenfolk are beautiful and wear unusual clothing, and they ride on horseback in the same way that their fathers did. Their army is very strong whenever it is assembled. On the coast lies a district called Curonia, which is fifty miles long. Few Christians may enter that land without the permission of its inhabitants, and those that do will lose their lives and property. The Oselians are fierce heathens and neighbours of the Curonians. They are surrounded by the sea and thus rarely have to fear hostile armies in summer, as is well known to us. They harry all the lands around them that can be reached by water, and they have taken much booty from Christians and heathens alike, for their ships are their greatest strength. The Estonians are also heathens, and there are great numbers of them. This is because their country is wide and of such extent that I cannot possibly describe. They possess so many fierce warriors and so many different lands that I do not wish to name them all. The Livs are heathens, too, but we hope that God will change this.³¹

But along with these isolated general mappings,³² more interesting are the more concrete testimonies of cultural territorializing of the region and conflicts which I will now analyse.

³¹ *Livländische Reimchronik*, ed. Leo Meyer (Paderborn, 1876), lines 326–77: *Littowen eine sint genant. / die heidenschaft ist höchgemût, / ir her vil discke schaden tût / an der reinen cristenheiyt. / daz kumt dâ von, ir macht ist breit. / dâ bie liet ein heidenschaft, / die hât von lûten grôze craft. / Semegallen sint die genant, / die herent umme sich die lant. / wer in ist zû mâzen / vil nôte sie deme icht lâzen. / Sêlen ouch heiden sint / und an allen tugenden blint. / sie haben abgote vil / und trîben bôsheit âne zil. / dâ nâch liet ein ander lant, / die sint Letten genant. / die heidenschaft hât spêhe site, / sie wonet nôte ein ander mite, sie bûwen besunder in manchen walt. / ir wib sint wunderlîch gestalt / und haben selzêne cleit. / sie rîten als ir vater reit. / der selben her hât grôze macht, / wenne sie zû samene werden brâcht. / dâ liet bie des meres strant / ein gegende, heizet Kûrlant: / die ist wol vumfzik mîle lanc. / vil cleine cristen mac ân irn danc / zû deme selben lande quomen, / in werde lîp und gût genomen. / Oselêre daz sint heiden sûr, / die sint der Kûren nâkebûr. / sie sint bevlozzen in dem mere, / sie vurchten selden grôze here / des sumers, daz ist und bekant, / sie heren umme sich die lant, wâ sie ûf dem wazzer mogen komen. / sie haben vil manchen roub genomen / den cristen und der heidenschaft. / mit schiffen its ir grôste craft. / Eisten ouch heiden sint. / die haben vil mancher mûter kint. / daz kumt dâ von, ir lant ist breit / und alsô wîte entzwei geleit, / daz ich des nicht volenden kan. / sie haben sô manchen rischen man / und ouch besunder lande vil, / nicht mêr ich ûch der nennen wil. / Lîven die sint heiden; / dâ sal sie got von scheiden / kurtzelîch [...].* Translated into English by Alan Murray. See also the English translation by Jerry C. Smith and William Urban, *The Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* (Bloomington, 1977), pp. 5–6.

³² One can mention also a short description of the eastern Baltic region, based on information provided by the encyclopedia of Bartholomaeus Anglicus, by Roger Bacon, in the geographical part of his *Opus Majus* (c. 1267): *Sed super latus aquilonare istius maris* [i.e. the Baltic Sea – M.T.] *immediate post angulum est Estonia; deinde Livonia versus orientem illius maris; deinde Curonia seu Curlandia declinando ad meridianum*

A New Promised Land

In the thirteenth-century geographical descriptions the eastern Baltic region emerges as the new ‘promised land’;³³ it has natural conditions reminiscent of the Garden of Eden or Canaan, but its inhabitants do not know how to make proper use of these natural riches. This strategy of interpretation has many textual examples and rhetorical causes. The description of new, mostly not yet Christianized lands as a kind of terrestrial Paradise is a common device of medieval authors; on the one hand it bound their texts to the authority of the Bible, but on the other created a wonderful starting point to describe and justify the subsequent process of Christianization. One of the most telling examples is undoubtedly the description of Britain found in the beginning of Venerable Bede’s *The Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation* (731). Having placed the island geographically, he then goes on to give an overview of its natural advantages:

The island is rich in crops and in trees, and has good pasturage for cattle and beasts of burden. It also produces vines in certain districts, and has plenty of both land- and waterfowl of various kinds. It is remarkable too for its rivers, which abound in fish [...]. The land possesses salt springs and warm springs and from them flow rivers which supply hot baths [...].³⁴

As Chris Given-Wilson recently wittily interpreted this opening paragraph, ‘this is a “creation scene”, evocative of a paradise fertile and teeming with all things

Itus; postea Prussia magna terra in meridiano latere; deinde Pomerania; postea Lubec, portus magnus et famosus in confinio Daciae et Saxoniae. In medio vero istius maris est insula quaedam quae vocatur Gothlandia. Et super Livoniam ad orientem est Semi-Gallia. Et istas terras, scilicet Estoniam, Livoniam, Semi-Galliam, Curoniam, circumdat Leucovia praedicta, et eam circumdat Russia magna [...]. See Ex Rogeri Bacon Opere maiore, in Ex rerum Anglicarum Scriptoribus saeculi XIII, ed. Felix Liebermann, MGH SS 28 (Hannover, 1888), pp. 572–73.

³³ The very notion of the ‘promised land’ can be found in connection with Livonia already in the *Chronica Slavorum* of Arnold of Lübeck. See Arnold of Lübeck, *Chronica Slavorum*, ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz, MGH Scriptores rerum Germanicarum 14 (Hannover, 1868), p. 214: *Nec defuerunt sacerdotes et litterati, suis exhortationibus eos [i.e. crusaders] confortantes et ad terram promissionis felici perseverantia eos pertinere promittentes.* On Arnold’s chronicle, see most recently Scior, *Das Eigene und das Fremde*, pp. 223–327; Kaspar Kolk, ‘Lüübeki Arnold: Liivimaa põõramisest’, *Tuna: Ajalookultuuri ajakiri* 7/1 (2004), 70–83; 7/2 (2004), 37–57; Kaljundi, ‘Waiting for the Barbarians’, pp. 86–92, 160–73; *Die Chronik Arnolds von Lübeck. Neue Wege zu ihrem Verständnis*, ed. Stephan Freund and Bernd Schütte (Frankfurt am Main, 2008).

³⁴ *Bede’s Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. Bertram Colgrave and R.A.B. Mynors (Oxford, 1969), pp. 14–17.

necessary to life, had humanity but the wit to appreciate it'.³⁵ Following Bede's example, many medieval historians of Britain and even other countries began their chronicles with a similar geographical description of England.³⁶ The same kind of Paradise-like descriptions can also be found in abundance in the crusader chronicles of the Holy Land and in travel writings.³⁷

The Paradise-like describing of new territories yet to be conquered and Christianized could also serve a clearly propagandist purpose. Robert Bartlett has demonstrated how from the twelfth century on, a series of texts were composed in Western Europe that referred to the emptiness of the lands in Eastern Europe, as well as to their potential fertility, in order to lure crusaders and colonists. Hungary, wrote the chronicler Otto of Freising (d. 1158), 'is known to be rich both from the natural pleasantness of its appearance and from the fertility of its fields'. But, he lamented, 'its fields have scarcely felt the plough and mattock' and he puzzled over what had 'exposed a land as delectable as this to such, not men, but human monsters'. The French monk Odo of Deuil, passing through the borderlands of Hungary and Bulgaria in the middle of the twelfth century, commented that they 'abound in those good things which nature herself brings forth and could support the rest, if there were settlers'.³⁸

Of these texts belonging to the field of the so-called *excitatoria*, one of the most interesting is undoubtedly an anonymous Magdeburg letter from the early twelfth century that calls for a crusade against the Wends living on the southern shore of the Baltic Sea:

These gentiles are most wicked, but their land is the best, rich in meat, honey, corn and birds; and if it were well cultivated none could be compared to it for the wealth of its produce. So say those who know it. And so, most renowned Saxons, French, Lorrainers, and Flemings and conquerors of the world, this is an occasion for you to save your souls and, if you wish it, acquire the best land in which to live.³⁹

³⁵ Chris Given-Wilson, *Chronicles: The Writing of History in Medieval England* (London, 2004), p. 128.

³⁶ Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, p. 128; Robert Bartlett, *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings, 1075–1225* (Oxford, 2000), p. 286.

³⁷ For a short overview, see Peter Biller, *The Measure of Multitude. Population in Medieval Thought* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 239–44.

³⁸ Robert Bartlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change, 950–1350* (London, 1993), p. 137.

³⁹ *Urkunden und erzählende Quellen zur deutschen Ostsiedlung im Mittelalter*, ed. Herbert Helbig and Lorenz Weindirch, 2 vols (Darmstadt, 1968–70) 1: 99, no. 19. English translation taken from *The Crusades. Idea and Reality, 1095–1274*, ed. Louise and Jonathan Riley-Smith (London, 1981), no. 13, pp. 76–77. The document is traditionally dated 1108, although Richard Fletcher has argued recently for 1120–25: Richard Fletcher, *The Conversion of Europe. From Paganism to Christianity, 371–1386* (London, 1997),

In this context it is hardly surprising that, starting with the very first writings from the time of the crusades describing the eastern Baltic region, these too are dominated by references to the region's fertility and natural lushness. And it is interesting to note that this medieval tradition was still viable even in early modern times. Thus Sebastian Münster, for example, noted in his *Cosmography* (1544) that Livonia 'is a good land, sufficiently fertile: plenty of forest, fields, waters rich in fish and many large lakes'.⁴⁰ And Dionysius Fabricius, a Polish priest resident in Fellin (mod. Viljandi, Estonia), describes Livonia in the same spirit even in the early seventeenth century.⁴¹

In Latin writing, the first author to announce the arrival of Christianity in Livonia was Arnold of Lübeck in his *Chronica Slavorum*. Typically for a mission chronicle, the text is ripe with agricultural metaphors, and Arnold announces enticingly:

In the year 1186 of the incarnation the venerable Meinhard founded the episcopal see in Livonia that was placed under the patronage of Mary, Blessed Mother of God, in a place that was called Riga. And since because of the goodness of the earth this place is abundant in many riches, it has never been lacking in servants of

pp. 486–87. See also Giles Constable, 'The Place of the Magdeburg Charter of 1107/08 in the History of Eastern Germany and of the Crusades', in *Vita Religiosa im Mittelalter: Festschrift für Kaspar Elm zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Franz J. Felten and Nikolas Jaspert (Berlin, 1999), pp. 283–99; Marian Dygo, 'Crusade and Colonization: Yet another Response to the Magdeburg charter of 1108 AD', *Quaestiones Medii Aevi Novae* 6 (2001), 319–25.

⁴⁰ Sebastian Münster, *Cosmographie* (Basel, 1544), fol. 502: *Est is gut land, hat frucht gnug, vil wäid, weld, fischreich wässer, und vil grosser seen*. In the new Latin edition of *Cosmographia* published in 1550 there is a description of Livonia written in the same spirit: *Liuania terra est palustris, nemorosa, arenosa, plana & sine montibus, irrigua fluiijs & perinde satis piscosa, pro maiori parte inculta, fertilis tamen agris & pascuis abundans*. Sebastian Münster, *Cosmographia Universalis* (Basel, 1550), fol. 787. See Juhan Kreem, 'Sebastian Münster and "Livonia illustrata": Information, Sources and Editing', in *Festschrift für Vello Helk zum 75. Geburtstag: Beiträge zur Verwaltungs-, Kirchen- und Bildungsgeschichte des Ostseeraumes*, ed. Enn Küng and Helina Tamman (Tartu, 1998), pp. 149–69.

⁴¹ Dionysius Fabricius, 'Livonicae historiae compendiosa series', ed. Carl Eduard Napiersky, in *Scriptores rerum Livonicarum*, 2 vols (Riga, 1848–53), 2: 247–510 (here 440–41): *Estque haec provincia [Livonia] etiam frugum fertilitate vberima, quippe quae omnis generis frumenta producit, et quamvis minori cum molestia terra excolatur [...]. Armentorum et pecudum mater et nutrix est optima, sufficiens praebendo alimentum. Sylvis et eremis ditissima, quibus paludes sunt intermistae, pascua et prata pingua, faeni copia*. On the Livonian chronicle of Fabricius, see most recently Sulev Vahtra, 'Dionysius Fabricius Liivimaa kroonika', *Ajalooline ajakiri* 1/119 (2007), 3–21.

Christ and planters of the new church. For this land is fertile in fields, plentiful in pastures, irrigated by rivers, also sufficiently rich in fish and forested with trees.⁴²

Although he was writing a chronicle of the Christianization of Livonia parallel to that of Arnold, Henry of Livonia did not pay much attention to geographical descriptions, but when he did so, it was in the same Paradise-like style. For example, when recounting the campaign of 1219 to Vironia carried out by the Sword Brethren and their local allies, Henry does not fail to mention that it is 'a very beautiful and fertile land and fair with level fields'.⁴³

But the most powerful and influential picture of the Baltic frontier areas is painted by Bartholomaeus Anglicus in the fifteenth book of his *De proprietatibus rerum*. With nearly all six eastern Baltic regions, Bartholomaeus emphasizes the fertility of their soil and the abundant flora and fauna. 'Lithuania,' he writes, 'is an area that has fertile soil; it is marshy and wooded in many places, irrigated by rivers and waters, there are a lot of wild animals and livestock.'⁴⁴ 'Revalia,' he continues in a somewhat more subdued tone, 'is moderately fertile, irrigated by waters and ponds, it is rich in sea and lake fish, and there is much small and large livestock.'⁴⁵ More to the south is Sambia, that is 'fertile and productive in soil, a marshy and wooded land, surrounded by many rivers and lakes'.⁴⁶ Also Semgallia is a land that is 'good and rich in crops, cattle and pastures'.⁴⁷ But the crown of Bartholomaeus's description of the eastern Baltic region is Vironia, in which he deems it necessary to explain twice (both in the chapters of Revalia and Vironia)

⁴² Arnold of Lübeck, *Chronica Slavorum*, V.30, pp. 213–14: *Anno igitur incarnati 1186. fundata est sedes episcopalis in Livonia a venerabili viro Meinardo, intitulata patrocinio beate Dei genitricis Marie, in loco qui Riga dicitur. Et quia idem locus beneficio terre multis bonis exuberat, nunquam ibi defuerunt Christi cultores, et novelle ecclesie plantatores. Est enim eadem terra fertilis agris, abundans pascuis, irrigua fluviiis, satis etiam piscosa et arboribus nemorosa.*

⁴³ Henry of Livonia, *Heinrici Chronicon Livoniae*, ed. Leonid Arbusow and Albert Bauer, MGH Scriptores rerum Germanicarum 31 (Hannover, 1955), ch. XXIII.7, p. 160. The quotations in English are taken from *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, trans. James A. Brundage (Madison, Wisc., 1961).

⁴⁴ MS Paris, BNF, lat.16098, fol. 146v: *Est autem Lectoria regio, cuius gleba est fructifera, palustris in multis locis et valde nemorosa, fluminibus et aquis est irrigua, feris et pecudibus valde plena.*

⁴⁵ MS Paris, BNF, lat.16098, fol. 151r [146r]: *Riualia est prouinciola [...] cuius gleba mediocriter est frugifera, aquis et stangnis irrigua, piscibus marinis et lacualibus est fecunda, plures habens greges pecudum et armenta.* The pagination of this manuscript becomes confused on folio 149r, which is marked as 144r. I shall therefore give the correct reference in the first place and the erroneous one in brackets.

⁴⁶ MS Paris, BNF, lat.16098, fol. 152r [147r]: *Est autem Sambia terra fertilis gleba et frugum ferax, terra palustris et nemorosa, multis fluminibus et lacubus circumuallata.*

⁴⁷ MS Paris, BNF, lat.16098, fol.153r [148r]: *Terra bona et fertilis in annona, in pascuis et in pratis.*

that this land obtained its name from the Latin word *viror* (greenery) because 'it is grassy and wooded, endowed with many waters and springs'.⁴⁸ Although it must be noted that Bartholomaeus insists on fertility when describing many other lands, one finds in his encyclopedia several northern regions in which, by contrast, barrenness is emphasized (such as Finland,⁴⁹ Norway⁵⁰ or Iceland).⁵¹

Bartholomaeus's descriptions do not enable the medieval reader to count the eastern Baltic territories as part of their 'own' landscapes, because there are several signs pointing to the need to still appropriate them. Most of all, what needs to be emphasized is the abundance of forests in the region and the lack of towns and forts.

In medieval cultural geography, the forest was without a doubt a phenomenon with strong connotations that as a rule indicated something exotic and pagan. Roger Bartra has put it well: 'The medieval forest was a vast stock of pagan beliefs, suggestive of a site of unprecedented marvels; a bewitched space, the final redoubt of pagan deities always transfigured into demonic figures who ambushed Christian society. Forests were a kind of inner frontier that genuinely or imaginarily menaced the Christian faith.'⁵²

Bartholomaeus stresses the abundance of forest in the case of Lithuania where it is mentioned three times in four sentences, and keeping in mind the future conquests, he elaborates: 'It is protected by forests and swamps, therefore there are few fortifications other than rivers, forests and swamps.' But the key word 'wooded' can also be found in other descriptions. In many instances, Henry of Livonia also refers to the abundance and dangerousness of forests.⁵³ The hiding

⁴⁸ MS Paris, BNF, lat.16098, fol.155v [150v]: *Vironia prouincia est paruula [...], a virore dicta eo, quod sit graminosa et nemorosa, multis aquis et fontibus profusa*. See also fol. 151r [146r]: *Riualia est prouinciola quondam barbara [...], cuius pars Vironia est vocata, a virore sic dicta eo, quod sit graminosa et pascuosa, in locis pluribus nemorosa*.

⁴⁹ MS Paris, BNF, lat.16098, fol. 155v [150v]: *Winlandia est patria [...] non multum fertilis nisi in graminibus et in silvis*. On Bartholomaeus's description of Finland, see Luigi de Anna, 'Il nutrimento del pregiudizio. Codici alimentari riferiti agli abitanti della Finlandia e del Settentrione nelle fonti occidentali', in *Quotidianum Fennicum: Daily Life in Medieval Finland*, ed. Christian Krötzel and Jaakko Masonen (Krems, 1989), pp. 29–44 (here 35); De Anna, *Conoscenza e immagine della Finlandia e del Settentrione nella cultura classico-medievale* (Turku, 1988), pp. 136–45; De Anna, 'The Peoples of Finland and Early Medieval Sources: The Characterization of "Alienness"', in *Suomen varhaishistoria*, ed. Kyösti Julku (Rovaniemi, 1992), pp. 11–22.

⁵⁰ MS Paris, BNF, lat.16098, fol. 148r: [Norwegia] *est autem regio asperrima et frigidissima*.

⁵¹ MS Paris, BNF, lat.16098, fol. 156r [151r]: *Yselandia [...] terra est sterilis quo ad fruges, exceptis paucis locis, in quorum vallibus vix crescit avena*.

⁵² Roger Bartra, *Wild Men in the Looking Glass. The Mythic Origins of European Otherness* (Ann Arbor, 1994), p. 81.

⁵³ For analyses of Henry's representation of the eastern Baltic forest landscape, see Kaljundi, 'Waiting for the Barbarians', pp. 103–104.

places in the woods (*silvis latibula*) are for him the main characteristics of the local landscape that offer the locals protection against enemy forays,⁵⁴ and also make it possible for them to launch unexpected counterattacks.⁵⁵

In medieval geographical culture, wooded landscape contrasts with cultivated and urbanized territory. Unlike Roman culture, which tended to contrast city and country (Lat. *urbs* and *rus*), in the Middle Ages the pair of opposites was culture and nature, expressed in terms of 'opposition between what was built, cultivated, and inhabited (city, castle, village) and what was essentially wild (the ocean and forest, the western equivalents of the eastern desert), that is between men who lived in groups and those who lived in solitude'.⁵⁶

It is telling that in his descriptions of the eastern Baltic region, Bartholomaeus never mentions the towns or strongholds of the region. As Peter Biller has pointed out, Bartholomaeus's descriptions of lands can be structured according to whether they mention cities or not. A closer look at his encyclopedia clearly reveals that whereas in the case of Western Europe mentioning one or several cities is common, in the case of eastern and northern Europe this tends to be an exception.⁵⁷ Likewise, the author of *Descriptiones terrarum* does not dwell on the settlements of the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea. Through their allusions to pagan customs and fear of the unknown, and contrasting with cleared and settled landscapes, thirteenth-century descriptions of the eastern Baltic region depict a landscape that, despite Paradise-like natural endowments, still awaits appropriation and domestication.

Conversion of the Pagan Landscape

When we compare the description of local conditions with the depiction of the customs and behaviour of locals in the thirteenth-century narratives, we immediately notice a certain tension and antagonism. From an ideological point of view, the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea is in essence an idolatrous and diabolical landscape, whose inhabitants are brutal and barbaric. The most detailed and colourful account of the savagery of the Baltic pagans and the gradual uprooting of it is given by the main witness to the crusade, Henry of Livonia. One of his favourite expressions is 'the ferocity of the pagans' (Lat. *ferocitas gencium*), used to characterize, among others, the Estonians, Curonians, Lithuanians and Semgallians. With reference to the Livs he announces that this people 'were formerly most perfidious, and

⁵⁴ The Livonians are said to take refuge from the Lithuanians in hiding-places in the woods (Henry of Livonia, ch. XI.5, p. 53). Yet also during their revolts they are said to 'leaving behind the villages went back to hiding-places in the woods' (ch. IX.8, p. 30). See also ch. IX.9, p. 30, X.12, p. 41, XI.9, p. 57.

⁵⁵ See Henry of Livonia, ch. IX.11–12, p. 31, XIV.8, pp. 79–80.

⁵⁶ Jacques Le Goff, *The Medieval Imagination* (Chicago, 1988), p. 58.

⁵⁷ Biller, *The Measure of Multitude*, pp. 223–25.

everyone stole what his neighbour had, but now theft, violence, rapine, and similar things were forbidden as a result of their baptism'.⁵⁸ An interesting evidence of the savagery of the Estonians is given by a little-known anonymous chronicle on the history of the Dominican order in Denmark, dateable to about the mid-thirteenth century. This short text contains a casual overview of the founding of the Dominican convent in Reval (mod. Tallinn, Estonia) where a first attempt, probably in 1239, failed due to opposition by the locals. The anonymous Dominican author writes:

The Estonians being crude and untaught in matters of faith, given and inclined to the wretched practices of infidels, they were cruel and savage towards churchmen, for they killed the first bishop with his clerics, and the friars were forced to return, with few of them remaining, to the convents from where they had come.⁵⁹

While describing the brutality of the population of the eastern Baltic, Bartholomaeus Anglicus also spares no epithets: 'Lithuanians are strong and forceful, militant and wild people'; the population of Seme-gallia 'is barbaric and uncivilised, savage and cruel'; the population of Vironia is 'barbaric, wild, uncouth and uncivilised'.⁶⁰ In the texts the brutality and ferocity of the locals are directly linked to their idolatry, which does indeed rob them of Christian virtues and civilized behaviour.

Parallel to the conquests of the Germans and the Danes there are some optimistic notes on the progress of Christianity which emerge from the descriptions, but up to the end of the century and even later, references to the idolatry and barbarity of the locals remain dominant in the texts.⁶¹ Nevertheless, the sparse signs of

⁵⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. X.15, p. 46.

⁵⁹ *Historia Ordinis Praedicatorum in Dania*, ed. Simon Tugwell, in 'Notes on the Life of St. Dominic', *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 68 (1998), 111–12: *Sed quia Estonos in operibus fidei rudes et inculti, ad miserabiles ritus infidelitatis proni et proclivi, crudeles erant contra personas ecclesiasticas atque seui, nam primum episcopum cum suis clericis occiderunt, inde redire fratres ad conuentus de quibus assumpti fuerant, paucis remanentibus, sunt compulsi*. On the problems of dating and editing this text, see Bjørn Halvorsen, 'Aux origines de l'Ordre des Prêcheurs dans les pays nordiques', *Mémoire dominicain* 6 (1995), 249–65; Tugwell, 'Notes on the Life of St. Dominic', pp. 111–16; Marek Tamm, 'When Did the Dominicans Arrive in Tallinn?', *Past: Ajalookultuuri ajakiri*, Special issue on the history of Estonia (2009), 34–45.

⁶⁰ MS Paris, BNF, lat.16098: [Lithuanians are] *homines robusti et fortes, bellicosi et feroces* (fol. 146v); *gens* [of Seme-gallia] *barbara et inculta, aspera et seuera* (fol. 153r [148r]); *gens* [of Vironia] *barbara, seu, incompasita ac inculta* (fol. 155v [150v]).

⁶¹ For a general overview, see Tiina Kala, 'The Incorporation of the Northern Baltic Lands into the Western Christian World', in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, ed. Alan V. Murray (Aldershot, 2001), pp. 3–20 (here 15–9).

developments are interesting because they allow us to monitor how the hostile and pagan space was gradually converted into a safe and Christianized territory.⁶²

In the thirteenth-century texts, the religious convictions of the locals are usually traced through various rites. This enables the author to textually link the practices of the inhabitants of the eastern Baltic region to the rituals of antiquity and thereby endow them with specific meaning. This 'intertextual integration' is most pronounced in the interest taken in the locals' custom of divination and casting of lots. Henry of Livonia touches upon that practice in his chronicle on several occasions, linking the casting of lots directly to anti-Christian activity, because mostly pagans cast lots before a campaign against the Christians of Riga. Henry attributes the casting of lots to Estonians, Semgallians, Latvians and Livs.⁶³ The most telling example, though, is offered by Bartholomaeus Anglicus's encyclopedic description of Livonia. The Livs, he writes,

had peculiar religious rites, before the Germans forced them from serving demons to the faith and worship of one God. For they honoured many gods with impure and sacrilegious sacrifices, asked demons for prophecies, made use of auguries and divinations.⁶⁴

In this paragraph one has to notice the religious vocabulary of Bartholomaeus, which is for the most part borrowed from the culture of Ancient Rome (*responsum*, *auguratio* and *divinatio*);⁶⁵ it is not a coincidence that these words can also be found in other sources dealing with inhabitants of the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea.⁶⁶

⁶² See also the contributions by Kurt Villads Jensen and Carsten Selch Jensen in this volume. The creation of the Christian landscape has recently attracted the attention of many scholars. See, for example, Claude Lecouteux, *Démons et génies du terroir au Moyen Age* (Paris, 1995); John M. Howe, 'The Conversion of the Physical World. The Creation of a Christian Landscape', in *Varieties of Conversion in the Middle Ages*, ed. James Muldoon (Gainesville, Fla., 1997), pp. 63–78; David Stocker and Paul Everson, 'The Straight and Narrow Way, Fenland Causeways and the Conversion of the Landscape in the Witham Valley, Lincolnshire', in *The Cross Goes North: Processes of Conversion in Northern Europe, AD 300-1300*, ed. Martin Carver (York, 2003), pp. 271–88; Sam Turner, 'Making a Christian Landscape: Early Medieval Cornwall', in *The Cross Goes North*, pp. 171–94; Turner, *Making a Christian Landscape. The Countryside in Early-Medieval Cornwall, Devon and Wessex* (Exeter, 2006).

⁶³ Henry of Livonia, ch. XX.2, p. 148, XII.2, p. 59, XI.7, I.10, p. 4.

⁶⁴ MS Paris, BNF, lat.16098, fol. 146v: [...] *quorum ritus fuit mirabilis antequam a cultura demonum ad vnius Dei fidem et cultum per Germanicos cogerentur. Nam deos plures adorabant prophanis et sacrilegis sacrificiis, responsa a demonibus exquirebant, auguriis et diuinationibus seruiebant.*

⁶⁵ Richard Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 57–63, 85–90.

⁶⁶ Adam of Bremen, IV.16–17, pp. 242–44. See also below the mentions of divinatory practices among eastern Baltic tribes in the papal bulls.

The earliest general references to the pagan customs of the people of the eastern Baltic can be found in papal bulls starting from the thirteenth century.⁶⁷ The tone is noticeable in Pope Innocent III's appeal to the believers of Saxony and Westphalia in 1199 to come to the aid of the church of Livonia. In it he calls the Livs a 'barbarous people' (*populus barbarus*) who worship beasts, trees, waters, plants and impure spirits.⁶⁸ When compiling an address to the archbishop of Bremen and his suffragans five years later, in the very first sentence Innocent places Livonia on 'the edge of the world' (*in finem orbis terre*) with inhabitants living 'in the darkness of infidelity', and calls on everyone who cannot join the crusade against Jerusalem to join the crusade against 'these Livish barbarians'.⁶⁹ The depiction of eastern Baltic peoples in pagan terms can be found also in later bulls. When Pope Gregory IX named William of Modena as his legate in 1234, he said of the people of the eastern Baltic region that 'as they do not know the cult of the name of Christ, they apply all their devotion only to the cult of visible things'.⁷⁰ As Tiina Kala has noted, the same statement was repeated by Pope Innocent IV (1243–54) in connection with William's mission in 1244, but he added, 'changing the glory

⁶⁷ For the historical and ideological context of these bulls, see Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and The Baltic Crusades, 1147–1254* (Leiden, 2007); Barbara Bombi, 'Innocent III and the Praedicatio to the Heathens in Livonia (1198–1204)', in *Medieval History Writing and Crusading Ideology*, ed. Tuomas M. S. Lehtonen and Kurt Villads Jensen (Helsinki, 2005), pp. 232–41.

⁶⁸ LUB 1/1, no. 12, col. 14: *Accepimus enim, quod cum bonae memoriae M[einardus], episcopus Livoniensis, fuisset provinciam Livoniensem ingressus, in verbo Domini laxans praedicationis suae retia in capturam inter populos barbaros, qui honorem Deo debitum animalibus brutis, arboribus frondosis, aquis limpidis, virentibus herbis, et spiritibus immundis impendunt, usque adeo Domino concedente profecit, ut multos a suis erroribus revocatos ad agnitionem perduceret veritatis, et sacri baptismatis unda renatos, doctrinis salutaribus informaret.*

⁶⁹ LUB 1/1, no. 14, col. 18–19: *Etsi verbi evangelizantium pacem et evangelizantium bona in omnem terram exierint et in fines etiam orbis terrae [...]. Sane, cum Livonum gens usque ad haec tempora fuisset infidelitatis tenebris involuta et ad agnitionem non venerit veritatis, ut quasi solitudo fructum boni operis non afferret, nuper in ea Dominus misit sanctae praedicationis fluentia, ut ipsam, ad quam pro asperitate propriae siccitatis, via praedicatoribus non paruit usquemodo, aquis, que pertranseunt inter medium montium, feliciter irrigaret, ex quibus iam bestiae agi potant, quas Petrus mactans incorporando fidei catholicae manducavit. [...] At, cum messis sit multa, operarii vero pauci, a nobis idem episcopus humiliter postulavit, ut sacerdotes et clericos circumadiacentium regionum, qui, affixo suis humeris signo crucis voverunt Ierosolymam proficisci, in messem ipsius ad annuntiandum gentibus Iesum Christum mittere dignaremur, et nihilominus laicos, qui, propter rerum defectum et corporum debilitatem terram Ierosolymitanam adire non possunt, permitteremus in Livoniam contra barbaros proficisci, voto in votum de nostra licentia commutato.*

⁷⁰ LUB 1/1, no. 132, col. 170: *cultum Christiani nominis non habentes, omnem intentionem suam cultui tantum visibilium applicarent.*

of the incorruptible Lord to that of corruptible man and birds, quadrupeds, and serpents and preferring to serve the created rather than the Creator'.⁷¹

The latter descriptions can be nicely linked to the paragraph that Oliver of Paderborn dedicated to the Baltic pagans in his work *Historia regum Terre Sancte* (c. 1220). Introducing the fate of Christians in the Holy Land, the bishop of Paderborn unexpectedly interweaves into his chronicle the statement on how 'the great light of the Catholic faith' had reached the Livs, Estonians and Prussians, who had previously 'walked in the dark' and, ignorant of the mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God and the Word, had worshipped all kinds of mythological creatures and phenomena. Living in the protection of a forest which no axe was allowed to touch, they also venerated the waters, trees, hills, valleys and caves. Only now, during the reign of Pope Innocent III, were these pagans are being converted and subjected to Christian laws.⁷²

Two patterns of religious behaviour of the eastern Baltic peoples emerge from, and are criticized by, various thirteenth-century descriptions: nature worship and cremation of the dead. We read about the worship of trees and other natural phenomena in the texts quoted above, which can be supplemented by many other thirteenth-century testimonies.⁷³ For example, Henry of Livonia records the custom of tree worshipping by the Livs, Jerwians and Vironians,⁷⁴ noting the existence of a 'sacred wood' (Lat. *sancta silva*) in the case of the Jerwian. The *Danish Census Book* (*Liber Census Daniae*), compiled around 1240, writes about a 'sacred grove' (*lucus sanctus*) in an entry about the village of Vörkla in Vironia.⁷⁵ There is also

⁷¹ LUB 1/1, no. 179, col. 234: *mutantes gloriam incorruptibilis Dei, in similitudinem imaginis corruptibilis hominis et volucrum, quadrupedum et serpentium, et creature servire quam Creatori potius eligentes* [...]. See Kala, 'The Incorporation of the Northern Baltic Lands into the Western Christian World', p. 17.

⁷² Oliver of Paderborn, 'Historia regum Terre Sancte', in *Die Schriften des Kölner Domscholasters, späteren Bischofs von Paderborn und Kardinal-Bischofs von S. Sabina Oliverus*, ed. Hermann Hoogeweg (Tübingen, 1894), pp. 156–57: *Temporibus eiusdem pontificis* [i.e. Innocent III] *populos aquilonaris, qui ambulabat in tenebris, vidit lucem magnam catholice fidei. Nam gens Livonum, Estonum, Prutonum variis erroribus delusa ignorans Dei filium et incarnati verbi mysterium, numina gentilium colebat, driades, amadriades, oreades, napeas, humides, satiros et faunos. Separabat enim sibi lucos, quos nulla securis violare presumpsit, ubi fontes et arbores, montes et colles, rupes et valles venerabantur, quasi aliquid virtutis et auspicii reperiri posset in eis. Nunc autem sanam doctrinam secuta, ad episcopum et pastorem animarum suarum conversa, Jhesum Christum, pontificibus suis obediens ecclesias edificat et frequentat, legibus Christianis pro magna parte subiecta*. Oliver's text was reproduced verbatim some years later in Emo's (d. 1237) chronicle, see *Emonis Chronicon*, ed. Ludwig Weiland, MGH SS 23: 465–523 (here 474).

⁷³ On the custom of tree-worshipping by the people of the eastern Baltic, see Jakob Ozols, 'Zur Frage der heiligen Wälder im östlichen Ostseegebiet', *ZfO* 26 (1977), 671–81.

⁷⁴ Henry of Livonia, ch. II.9, p. 11; XXIII.9, p. 166; XXIV.5, p. 175.

⁷⁵ Paul Johansen, *Die Estlandliste des Liber Census Daniae* (København, 1933), pp. 200–201, 605.

information on a tree cult among the Baltic peoples: for example, a contract of the Teutonic Order made with the Curonians in 1253 mentions 'non-sacred woods' (*silvis non sanctis*), which thus provides indirect evidence of the existence of 'sacred woods'.⁷⁶ The anonymous author of the *Descriptiones terrarum* also writes about the tree worship of the Sambians and Prussians: '[Sambians] like the Prussians worshipped special woods as gods'.⁷⁷ A few decades later, Peter von Dusburg supports him in his *Chronicle of the Prussian Land* (*Chronicon terrae Prussiae*): '[Prussians] had forests, fields, and sacred waters in which no one was allowed to cut down trees, plough, or fish'.⁷⁸

Therefore it is not surprising that one of the most important means of converting the heathen landscape was the fight against sacred groves and wooden idols. The most colourful story of this struggle is brought to us by Henry of Livonia. On one of his missionary campaigns to Vironia in 1220 he and his companion Theodoric reached three villages on the edge of Vironia:

There was a mountain and a most lovely forest in which, the natives say, the great god of the Oeselians, called Tharapita, was born, and from which he flew to Oesel. The other priest went and cut down the images and likenesses which had been made there of their gods. The natives wondered greatly that blood did not flow and they believed the more in the priest's sermons.⁷⁹

Alongside tree worship, the thirteenth-century descriptions emphasize most of all the peculiar burial customs of the natives. Actually, this is not unexpected since, as many works of anthropologists and historians demonstrate, the depiction of dying and burial customs is one of the most classic ways to construct 'the Other'. The French hellenist François Hartog has summarized this principle: tell me how you die and I'll tell you who you are.⁸⁰

For Christian authors, one of the main characteristics of the pagans was the cremation of the dead along with grave goods.⁸¹ These are briefly recounted by

⁷⁶ LUB 1/1, no. 248, col. 325: *Universi et curones a sua haereditate tam in agris, quam in praedictis picariis, et in silvis non sanctis et in arboribus milligeris nullatenus excludantur* [...]. See also LUB 1/1, no. 240, col. 303.

⁷⁷ Colker, 'America Rediscovered in the Thirteenth Century?', p. 721: *Hii quemadmodum Prutheni speciales siluas pro diis colebant*.

⁷⁸ Peter von Dusburg, 'Chronicon terrae Prussiae', ed. Max Töppen, in *SRP* 1: 3–219 (here 54).

⁷⁹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIV. 5, p. 175.

⁸⁰ François Hartog, *Le miroir d'Hérodote. Essai sur la représentation de l'autre* (Paris, 2001), p. 229.

⁸¹ It is worth mentioning that recent studies by archaeologists have shown that by the turn of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, interment was already known beside cremation among the local peoples. See Heiki Valk, 'About the Transitional Period in the Burial Customs in the Region of the Baltic Sea', in *Culture Clash or Compromise?*

Henry of Livonia,⁸² but the most explicit and thorough description of cremation is given by Bartholomaeus Anglicus in connection with the Livs. It must be noted that this chapter on Livonia is in many ways exceptional in his encyclopedia; firstly, it is much longer than other descriptions of the European periphery, secondly, it clearly departs from the general structure of his other chapters, where the focus is on the geographical location of the region and natural conditions. In the case of Livonia, Bartholomaeus confines himself to describing local religious beliefs and acts. The Livs, he writes,

did not bury the bodies of the dead but built a very large pyre and burned them to ashes. After death they clothed their friends in new garments and gave them sheep and cattle and other animals for their journey. They also consigned slaves and maidservants with other things, and these were burned with the deceased and the rest, in the belief that people so cremated would happily reach some realm of living creatures and there, with the numerous cattle and slaves burnt for the good of their master, find a happy homeland for afterlife.⁸³

From the same period, the author of *Descriptiones terrarum* gives evidence of the pagan funeral customs of Baltic tribes. In his description of Sambia, he remarks of the locals that ‘they burned their dead along with the horses and weapons and magnificent clothes. For they believed that they can use these and other burned items in a world to come.’⁸⁴

The Europeanisation of the Baltic Area 1100–1400 AD (Visby, 1998), pp. 237–50; Valk, *Rural Cemeteries of Southern Estonia, 1225–1800 AD* (Visby, 2001); Marika Mägi, *At the Crossroads of Space and Time. Graves, Changing Society and Ideology on Saaremaa (Õsel), 9th–13th Centuries AD* (Tallinn, 2002).

⁸² After a battle at Riga the Curonians are said to have been more worried about the corpses of their people than about continuing the fight (Henry of Livonia, ch. XIV.5, p. 76). Henry also describes the funeral rites of the Livs, and mentions their habit of celebrate them with drinking feasts (ch. II.8, p. 11).

⁸³ MS Paris, BNF, lat.16098, fols 146v–47r: *Mortuorum cadauera tumulo non tradebant, sed potius facto rogo maximo vsque ad cineres comburebant. Post mortem autem suos amicos nouis vestibus vestiebant et eis pro viatico eius oues et boues et alia animantia exhibebant. Seruos etiam et ancillas cum rebus aliis ipsis assignantes vna cum mortuo et rebus aliis incendebant, credentes sic incensos ad quandam viuorum regionem feliciter pertingere et ibidem cum pecorum et seruorum sic ob gratiam domini combustorum multitudinem felicitatis et vite temporalis patriam inuenire.*

⁸⁴ Colker, ‘America Rediscovered in the Thirteenth Century?’, p. 722: *Et mortuos cum equis et armis et nobilioribus uestibus comburebant. Credunt enim quod hiis et aliis que comburuntur in futuro seculo uti possint.* His notes are followed by the long and detailed Treaty of Christburg (1249) between the Teutonic Order and the Prussians, according to which the Prussians, in exchange for lands left to them, vowed to abandon their pagan ways, among other things to give up cremation and the custom of burying horses, living people, weapons, clothes and other valuable goods. See *PUB* 1/1, no. 218:

Although a negative image of the religious and burial customs of the people of the eastern Baltic is dominant in the thirteenth-century sources, it is not altogether void of hints at positive developments. The most eloquent is the remark by Bartholomaeus Anglicus following the description of the burial ceremony: 'This province, formerly in the clutches of the heresy of demons, has now in large part, with many subordinate or accessory regions, under the guidance of [divine] grace and in co-operation with the German forces been freed, as we believe, from the aforementioned errors.'⁸⁵

A fascinating account of the eradication of pagan vices and 'the Christianization of death' in Livonia is offered by the German Cistercian Caesarius of Heisterbach in his *Libri VIII miraculorum* (c. 1225–27).⁸⁶ In his many writings Caesarius expresses an uncanny interest in the happenings of Livonia, mentioning this region in his various works thirteen times in total.⁸⁷ In the unfinished *Libri VIII*

[...] *firmiter et fideliter promiserunt, quod ipsi vel heredes eorum in mortuis comburendis vel subterrandis cum equis sive hominibus vel cum armis seu vestibus vel quibuscunque aliis preciosis, vel etiam in aliis quibuscunque ritus gentilium de cetero non servabunt, sed mortuos suos iuxta morem christianorum in cymiteriis sepeliunt et non extra.* See also *Livländische Reimchronik*, lines 3870–90. Peter von Dusburg writes that the Prussians put in the graves of their noblemen weapons, horses, slaves, clothes and other such things and believed that the deceased was able to use all of them in the other life: Peter von Dusburg, 'Chronicon terrae Prussiae', p. 54. The usage of grave goods mentioned in thirteenth-century texts is partly corroborated by archaeological studies, for which see Valk, *Rural Cemeteries of Southern Estonia, 1225–1800 AD*, pp. 64–66; Saulė Urbanavičienė, 'Survivals of Paganism in 14th–17th-Century Graves in Lithuania', in *Rom und Byzanz im Norden. Mission und Glaubenswechsel im Ostseeraum während des 8.–14. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Michael Müller-Wille, 2 vols (Stuttgart, 1998), 2: 131–42. Archaeological studies also confirm the custom common among Baltic tribes of burying the dead with their horses. See Jan Jaskanis, 'Human Burials with Horses in Prussia und Sudovia in the First Millennium of Our Era', *Acta Baltico-Slavica* 4 (1966), 29–65; S. C. Rowell, *Lithuania Ascending: A Pagan Empire within East-Central Europe, 1295–1345* (Cambridge, 1994), pp 122–23, Ants Viires, 'Veohärjad ja hobused Baltimaadel', in Viires, *Kultuur ja traditsioon* (Tartu, 2001), pp. 112–37 (here 127–30).

⁸⁵ MS Paris, BNF lat.16098, fol. 147r: *Hec prouincia tali errore demonum antiquissimo tempore fascinata modo in parte magna cum multis regionibus subditis vel adnexis precedente gratia et cooperante Germanorum potentia iam creditur a predictis esse erroribus liberata.* See also Bartholomaeus's description of Vironia, fol. 155v [150v]: *Nunc vero Danorum regibus pariter et legibus est subiecta. Terra vero tota est a Germanis et Danis pariter habitata.*

⁸⁶ See Frederick S. Paxton, *Christianizing Death: The Making of a Ritual Process in Early Medieval Europe* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1990).

⁸⁷ See Lore Wirth-Poelchau, 'Caesarius von Heisterbach über Livland', *ZfO* 31 (1982), 481–98; Marek Tamm, 'Les miracles en Livonie et en Estonie à l'époque de la christianisation (fin XIIème – début XIIIème siècle)', in *Quotidianum Estonicum*, pp. 29–78. All the thirteen Livonian stories of Caesarius are reprinted in Marek Tamm, *Imeteod ristiusustamisaegsel Liivi- ja Eestimaal* (Tallinn, 1996), pp. 80–87. See also Barbara Bombi, 'The Authority of

miraculorum, Caesarius recounts a long story about a Livish pagan of noble birth, Caupo, who allowed himself to be baptized, and his manservant, who refused to make a confession on his deathbed. When the manservant had passed away, a few hours later his spirit unexpectedly returned to his body, upon which Caupo asked him where he came from and what had he done. The manservant replied with a long tale about his journey to the otherworld, at the end of which he was sent back as a lesson for others:

The angel of our Lord took me to various places of punishment, I do not know whether this happened in flesh or in spirit, God knows. And lo! In my vision, through the hand of the devil hot fish were handed to me on a plate, and they boiled ferociously with pepper. I was told: 'These are the fish that you withheld from your friend the fisherman and secretly ate without agreement and well-spiced. Eat these, too, then, because it is only fair that a sin be met with a punishment.' Looking at these, after thinking about them, I clearly recognized their quantity, species and portion. But as I greatly recoiled from eating them, the angel of our Lord told me: 'You swore to your master that you have not sinned, and since both your actions and words now manifest your guilt even more, you have to eat these fish without arguing.' What was I to do, but to eat all the fish meant for the punishment with the greatest torment, even devoured all of the pepper. After that I was taken to another place where I saw an enormous kettle boiling on a small fire. When I wondered that what could it mean and what could be in it, the angel told me: 'now a drink has been prepared for you'. 'What kind of a drink?' I asked. He replied: 'mead' and added: 'you said you were without sin and declined the healing power of confession'. And he reminded me of a deceit that I had committed. You see, I had many swarms of bees jointly with a neighbour, but I wretchedly abused his trust, secretly withdrew honey from some vats, made it into mead and drank it. I saw that the same vat I stole the honey from matched the kettle which was stoked by fire. After a while, some demons came and drew mead from the kettle, poured it in my throat, boiling, and I was forced to drink all of it. And when my whole insides were burning with heat, the demons shouted: 'drink what you have prepared for yourself.' Because in the same way and the same vessel that I made honey wine now a drink had been made for me; in the same measure that I had drunk the mead with extreme pleasure, I now had to drink it as a punishment. When all of this was carried out, I was led to a third place where I saw a carriage laden with hay and the angel of our Lord told me: 'All this hay will be burnt on your back because you took it home on a Sunday, even though you know the priest has forbidden it.' I cannot

Miracles: Caesarius of Heisterbach and the Livonian Crusade', in *Aspects of Power and Authority in the Middle Ages*, ed. Brenda Bolton and Christine Meek (Turnhout, 2007), pp. 305–25.

describe how I survived this punishment that consisted of the whole load of hay being burnt to ashes on my back by handfuls.⁸⁸

Using a universal plot to recount some of the problems that the missionaries of Livonia probably often had to deal with (not celebrating Sunday and stealing), this story that Caesarius supposedly heard from the abbot of the Cistercian convent of Dünamünde (Latv. Daugavgrīva), Bernard of Lippe, also gives an idea of the introduction of a new 'art of dying' to the locals.⁸⁹ In the context of this story it is also interesting to note that both Henry's *Chronicle of Livonia* and the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* present the death of Caupo himself as a perfect example of a Christian death, linking his suffering to the martyrdom of Christ himself.⁹⁰

Conclusion: Geography of Identity

The expansion of Europe in the thirteenth century changed the existing tradition of Latin cultural geography and brought information about many new regions to the consciousness of the learned European communities. The most important and novel was definitely the information that reached Europe after the first journeys of Franciscan friars to Asia in the mid-thirteenth century.⁹¹ The discovery of

⁸⁸ Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Libri VIII miraculorum*, ed. Alfons Hilka, in *Die Wundergeschichten des Caesarius von Heisterbach*, 3 vols (Bonn, 1937), 3: 56–58. See Tamm, 'Les miracles en Livonie et en Estonie à l'époque de la christianisation', pp. 65–68; see also Jacob Ozols, 'Caupos Knecht. Eine Geschichte des Cäsarius von Heisterbach', *JBS* 5 (1974), 222–5; Torben K. Nielsen, 'Mission and Submission. Societal Change in the Baltic in the Thirteenth Century', in *Medieval History Writing and Crusading Ideology*, pp. 216–31 (here 226).

⁸⁹ Caesarius's story is a variation of very a very popular motif in medieval homiletic and hagiographical literature. See Frederic C. Tubach, *Index exemplorum. A Handbook of Medieval Religious Tales* (Helsinki, 1969), nos 1188 and 2944. On medieval literature of otherworld journeys, see, for example, Carol Zaleski, *Otherworld Journeys. Accounts of Near-Death Experiences in Medieval and Modern Times* (Oxford, 1987), Claude Carozzi, *Le voyage de l'âme dans l'au-delà d'après la littérature latine (Ve–XIIe siècle)* (Rome, 1994). On medieval infernal visions, see, for example, Jérôme Baschet, *Les Justices de l'Au-delà. Les représentations de l'enfer en France et en Italie (XIIIe–XVe siècle)* (Rome, 1993), pp. 15–134.

⁹⁰ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXI.4, pp. 143–44; *Livländische Reimchronik*, lines 513–22.

⁹¹ See Johannes Fried, 'Auf der Suche nach der Wirklichkeit. Die Mongolen und die europäische Erfahrungswissenschaft im 13. Jahrhundert', *Historische Zeitschrift* 243 (1986), 287–332; Axel Klopprogge, *Ursprung und Ausprägung des abendländischen Mongolenbildes im 13. Jahrhundert. Ein Versuch zur Ideengeschichte des Mittelalters* (Wiesbaden, 1993); Johannes Gießauf, *Die Mongolengeschichte des Johannes von Piano Carpine. Einführung, Text, Übersetzung, Kommentar* (Graz, 1995); Gregory G. Guzman, 'European Clerical Envoys to the Mongols: Reports of Western Merchants in Eastern

the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea that took place about the same time did not, of course, merit as much attention, but it still gave birth to numerous textual testimonies about a new Christian colony.

These testimonies clearly reflect earlier Christian patterns of interpretation and give more information on the cultural convictions of medieval Europe than on the actual conditions of the new territories. In the texts of various authors there is clearly an intent to fuse the new regions into the current geographical discourse, in order to make them intelligible for a Christian audience. For this purpose, many rhetorical and narrative devices were used that can be summed up as an attempt at intertextual integration.

On a deeper level the thirteenth-century descriptions of the eastern Baltic region are evidence of the identity-building process of Europe, because describing foreign territories and making sense of cultural differences can be understood as the representation of the world in which a person who is writing can find himself.⁹² As recent studies have shown, the contacts between the representatives of the European core and the peripheries of Christianity were important factors in the evolution of European identity.⁹³ The cultural conflicts and exchanges on the edges of Christianity sorted out what has, to this day, become intrinsic to European identity. So in conclusion we can say that medieval European cultural geography was, in essence, 'geography of identity',⁹⁴ and frontier societies had an important part to play in its evolution.

Europe and Central Asia, 1231–1255', *Journal of Medieval History* 22 (1996), 53–67; Antti Ruotsala, *Europeans and Mongols in the Middle of the Thirteenth Century: Encountering the Other* (Helsinki, 2001).

⁹² See, for example, *Inventing Places: Studies in Cultural Geography*, ed. Kay Anderson and Fay Gale (Melbourne, 1992).

⁹³ See, for example, *Medieval Frontier Societies*, ed. Robert Bartlett and Angus Mackay (Oxford, 1989); Patrick Geary, *The Myth of Nations: The Medieval Origins of Nations* (Princeton, 2002); *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices*, ed. David Abulafia and Nora Berend (Aldershot, 2002); Nora Berend, 'Défence de la Chrétienté et naissance d'une identité. Hongrie, Pologne et péninsule Ibérique au Moyen Âge', *Annales HSS* 58 (2003), 1009–27.

⁹⁴ See, for example, *Geography of Identity*, ed. Patricia Yaeger (Ann Arbor, 1996); Martin Camargo, 'The Book of John Mandeville and the Geography of Identity', in *Marvels, Monsters, and Miracles: Studies in the Medieval and Early Modern Imagination*, ed. Timothy S. Jones and David A. Sprunger (Kalamazoo, Mich., 1999), pp. 67–84.

Chapter 2

The Baltic Crusades: A Clash of Two Identities

Eva Eihmane

Historiographical Clashes over the Baltic Crusades

When we consider the Baltic Crusades from the perspective of the attitudes of the parties involved, they emerge as a clash between two opposing identities and a watershed in the transformation of the local one. As such they have been the focus of much controversy and have served as a tool for different ideologies to substantiate or legitimate their territorial claims. They have also been greatly misinterpreted by the projection of modern values and ways of thought onto a medieval context and the judgement of these events on the basis of modern criteria.

Scholarship on the Baltic Crusades was founded on the works of medieval authors who wrote from the perspective of the bearers of Christianity. It struggled through the critical, anti-medievalist attitudes of the Enlightenment and eventually received a far-reaching impetus from the Romanticism that showed a positive interest in crusading and national history. In the nineteenth century this tendency inspired German authors of Baltic origin, such as Ernst Seraphim and Astaf von Transehe-Roseneck, to present the crusaders as a 'vehicle of culture' (Ger. *Kulturträger*), that is bearers of civilization, to the underdeveloped tribes of Livonia. It then gave impetus to a nationalism among Latvians and Estonians that lamented the lost freedom of their ancestors and the interrupted process of the building of nation-states. Last but not least, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries research on the Baltic Crusades became thoroughly saturated with materialistic attitudes.

These different tendencies derived from the concerns of their respective times: medieval Christian authors' commitment to the spread of the Christian faith; the opposition of Enlightenment writers to serfdom and their belief that it originated in the crusades; the concern of the Baltic Germans (who saw themselves as the heirs of the medieval *Kulturträger*) about the encroachment of the imperial Russian administration on their privileges and autonomy; and, finally, nationalists' preoccupation with ethnic pride and national independence as a paramount value and materialists' belief in economic advantage as a driving force. In fact, all these historiographical approaches reveal the crusade in the Baltic region as a clash between opposing identities: for contemporary chroniclers it was a clash between the army of God and the enemies of God; Enlightenment authors viewed it as a vile subjugation of the innocent, free-born children of nature by the products of a decadent, old civilization; for the spokesmen of the 'vehicle of culture' it was a

clash between superior German culture and the underdeveloped Baltic peoples to the eventual benefit of the latter; local nationalists regarded it as a heroic struggle of their freedom-loving ancestors for independence in the face of avaricious foreigners, while for those influenced by Marxist materialism, the crusade was a struggle between the just causes of the local peoples and enslavers acting under the false pretence of religion, but in fact driven by greed.¹ The two final tendencies (i.e. those influenced by nationalism and materialism) have subsequently merged in historical interpretations and even more so in public attitudes in the territory of former Livonia, serving as the basis for myths which assuage national pride and still affect the popular interpretation of history. The period of the Baltic Crusades has served such purposes well, precisely because it touched upon the roots and identity of the heirs of the former Baltic pagan tribes and provided the material for historical constructions that varied according to the needs of the respective age.²

A vivid illustration of the impact of different political agendas on the study of the Baltic Crusades can be seen in the varying historiographical treatment of Caupo, a chieftain of the Livs. One of the first to convert to Christianity, he became a staunch ally of the crusading forces, turning against his former comrades-in-arms.³ After being regarded as an exemplary neophyte ruler in the eyes of the crusaders, he continued to receive a positive assessment from the Baltic German historians of later ages. By contrast, among nationalistically minded modern authors his image became an epitome of treachery. Recent decades have seen a shift away from nationalistic and materialistic precepts, and modern Baltic scholars tend to regard

¹ For a more detailed insight into the impact of the topical issues of different periods of history on the historiography of medieval Livonia, see Kaspars Kļaviņš, 'Die Idee des Mittelalters als Beispiel des wechselnden Wertesystems in Lettland während des 20. Jahrhunderts', *Baltica: Die Vierteljahresschrift für Baltische Kultur* 1 (2001), 17–26; Kļaviņš, 'Die Interpretationen des Mittelalters in Lettland während des nationalen Erwachens der Letten', *Baltica: Die Vierteljahresschrift für Baltische Kultur* 3 (2000), 10–21; Kļaviņš, 'The Baltic Enlightenment and Perceptions of Medieval Latvian History', *Journal of Baltic Studies* 29 (1998), 213–24.

² This was particularly the case in the period after the establishment of the independent republics of Latvia and Estonia in the territory of former Livonia in 1918, when history was officially called upon – to use the words of Kārlis Ulmanis (President of Latvia 1934–40) – to raise the consciousness of unity in the nation and to boost national confidence, serving as a source of pride in the nation and thus 'consolidating the foundations for the future': Kārlis Ulmanis, 'Tauta un Vēsture', *Latvijas Vēstures institūta žurnāls* 1 (1937), 8–10 (here 10); Ulmanis, 'Klausaities vēstures soļos', *Latvijas Vēstures institūta žurnāls* 2 (1937), 163–86 (here 186).

³ For an analysis of Henry's treatment of Caupo as an exemplary 'transitory figure between paganism and Christianity' and an epitome of 'one man's necessary journey towards God', see Torben K. Nielsen, 'Mission and Submission: Societal Change in the Baltic in the Thirteenth Century', in *Medieval History Writing and Crusading Ideology*, ed. Tuomas M.S. Lehtonen and Kurt Villads Jensen (Helsinki, 2005), pp. 216–31 (here 227).

him either as a tragic personality, crushed between two opposing forces, or as a far-sighted leader who sought the best strategy for survival.⁴

If we discard the prejudices of later centuries and abstain from judgements based on modern criteria, and attempt instead to view the Baltic Crusades through the prism of contemporary value systems, while accepting the limitations of insight into the minds of people from another era, what does the overall picture tell us about the warring parties of the Baltic Crusades and their fundamental differences that were eventually resolved in the victory of one party and the defeat of the other? This chapter will attempt to answer this question by examining the identities of the bearers of Christianity and those of the local populations from the perspective revealed by the clash between the two, with a particular emphasis on the awareness of a common purpose or the lack of such an awareness in each of the warring parties.

Christian Unity and Disunity

Awareness of a common Christian identity and, more importantly, of a common purpose in serving the interests of Christendom as a whole can be demonstrated in the two main chronicles of the Baltic Crusades: the chronicle of the priest Henry of Livonia, covering the period 1180–1227,⁵ and the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* (Ger. *Livländische Reimchronik*) written by an anonymous author assumed to have been a member of the Teutonic Order, covering the period from the beginning of the Livonian mission until 1290.⁶ Henry of Livonia rejoices in the victories of God's Church in Egypt and elsewhere in the world, expressing regret that in Livonia its triumph was short-lived.⁷ The author of the *Rhymed Chronicle* suggests that success against the Russians in Pskov would have benefited Christendom until the end of the world; it is for similar reasons that God advises the Livonian Master

⁴ For instance, Guntis Zemītis, 'Kaupo – nodevējs vai laikmeta pretrunu upuris?', *Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas vēstis* 11–12 (1995), 27–29; Andris Caune, 'Vēsturē nav tikai melnais un baltais: Saruna redakcijā', *Lauku avīze* (19 September 1988), p. 7.

⁵ Henry of Livonia, *Heinrichs Livländische Chronik*, ed. Leonid Arbusow and Albert Bauer (Hannover, 1955). English translations cited in this chapter are taken from *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, trans. James A. Brundage (Madison, Wis., 1961). One problem with Brundage's translation is that it uses the English term 'Livonians' to refer both to the population of Livonia in general (Lat. *Lyvoneses*) as well as to the Finno-Ugrian Livs who formed only part of its population (Lat. *Lyvones*). I have therefore used the term 'Livs' where it clearly relates to the narrower, tribal sense. Other tribal and topographic names follow Brundage's usage.

⁶ *Livländische Reimchronik / Atskaņu hronika*, trans. Valdis Bisenieks, comm. Ēvalds Mugurēvičs and Kaspars Kļaviņš (Rīga, 1998).

⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIV.7, pp. 176–77: *Eodem eciam tempore christiani de terra Ierosilimitana ceperant Damiatam, civitatem Egypti, et habitabant in ea, et habebat ecclesia Dei victoriam et triumphos de paganis per orbem ubique terrarum, licet nobis non longo tempore.*

of the Teutonic Order to invade Curonia, just as the failure of a campaign against the Lithuanians is seen as bringing harm to Christianity.⁸

However, in much crusading activity the Christian ranks were far less homogeneous than at first sight, and were often split by internal political and material interests, as can also be observed in the ever-present discords among crusaders to the Holy Land from different regions. This seems to have been even more the case in the Baltic region. The northern part of Livonia was subjugated by the Danish king, who ruled there until 1346. The rest of the territory was in German hands and crusaders to this area were for the most part recruited from German lands, as testified by the numerous recruitment trips made by the Livonian bishops to Germany. The membership of the main military forces – the Sword Brethren and the Teutonic Order – was also primarily of German origin.⁹

In this respect the chronicle of Henry of Livonia gives striking testimony to the bitter rivalries between the Danish and German bearers of Christianity. Henry complains about the unfair methods of competition of the Danes, who repress those who accept Christianity from the German missionaries, are extremely superficial in their baptizing work and in general strive to reap ‘a foreign harvest’ (*quasi in alienam messem*), which has been planted by Bishop Albert’s men.¹⁰ However, we have to consider the possible purpose and political programme of the chronicle. As Henry was personally associated with the German crusading activity, one would naturally expect a certain partiality in his evaluation of the relative contribution of the two missionary efforts. The general consensus in modern scholarship is that Henry’s chronicle was intended for submission to the papal legate during his visit to Livonia in 1225–26 in order to advocate and legitimize the position of the bishop of Riga at the Curia.¹¹ Considering the political situation at the particular moment when German and Danish authorities were struggling over Livonia, one should be wary of taking literally Henry’s description of the superficial attitude of the Danes towards the spreading of the Christian faith in contrast to the German efforts. However, the chronicler’s partial stance and especially his occasionally

⁸ *Livländische Reimchronik*, trans. Bisenieks, lines 2195–97: *were Plezcowe dā behūt / daz, wēre nū dem cristentūme gūt / biz, an der werlde ende*; lines 2356–57: *sider dem cristentūme gūt, / er wole heren Kūrlant*; lines 5541–43: *daz, nicht misselingen / dorfte der reinen cristenheit*.

⁹ Eric Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades: The Baltic and the Catholic Frontier, 1100–1525* (London, 1980), pp. 81–82, 95.

¹⁰ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIV.1–2, pp. 170–72.

¹¹ For example, Arveds Švābe ‘Jersikas karaļvalsts’, *Senatne un Māksla* 1 (1936), 5–31 (here 13); Ēvalds Mugurēvičs, ‘Priekšvārds’ (foreword to the Latvian edition of Henry’s chronicle), in *Indriķa hronika* (Riga, 2001), pp. 7–30 (here 26). Differing views have been expressed as well; Bauer, for instance, agrees that the papal legate was the addressee of the chronicle, argues against the chronicler’s association with the bishop and insists that Henry represented his own position and that of his fellow missionaries: Albert Bauer, ‘Einleitung’, in *Heinrichs Livländische Chronik*, p. xx.

overly passionate outbursts against the Danes – such as his long monologue on the occasion of the subordination of Livonia to the Danish king that he portrays as an injustice that offends Livonia's patroness, St Mary¹² – are in themselves evidence of competition and the clash of interests within the Christian camp.

In the longer term the greatest damage to the Christian cause came from the discords among the military orders (that is, the Sword Brethren and later the Teutonic Order), the ecclesiastical authorities and the towns. This was especially the case in the later phase of Christianization, that is the missionary work among the peoples of Livonia after their political subjugation and formal conversion to Christianity, once there were no longer common pagan enemies (except for the Lithuanians) to mobilize and unite the Christians; the Christian camp in Livonia thus became increasingly split and violence no longer necessarily served a shared Christian cause, but often hindered it. Numerous documents from the period contain complaints on the part of ecclesiastical authorities, predominantly the bishop (from 1255, archbishop) of Riga against the Sword Brethren, and an even larger number against the Teutonic Order.¹³ There are also complaints by the orders against the ecclesiastical authorities, although these are admittedly fewer in number and contain less striking abuses. For example, accusations brought against the Sword Brethren by the papal legate Baldwin of Aulne in 1234 charge members of the order with numerous flagrant abuses against the Church and converts, such as the massacre of the Pope's vassals in Reval (mod. Tallinn, Estonia) that included the spilling of their blood in a graveyard and even on an altar, as well as stealing property of the Cistercian monastery at Dünamünde (mod. Daugavgrīva, Latvia).¹⁴ In turn Albert von Buxhövden, bishop of Riga, was reprimanded by Pope Innocent III in 1213 for having deprived converts of their properties in Riga and imposed excessive material burdens on them.¹⁵ In 1232 he was charged with the illegal subjugation of the Curonians and other converts and hampering the spreading of

¹² Henry of Livonia, ch. XXV.2, pp. 178–81.

¹³ Attempts to find an explanation for the Teutonic Order's evident blatant violence against the ecclesiastical authorities and the spreading of the Christian faith have pointed to various possibilities: an exaggeration of the Order's impunity in complaints against it; a collective mentality, marked by arrogance and military and chivalric values; but above all, its interest in having heathens in sight to fight against as an important justification for the Order's very existence after its original goal of fighting the Muslims in the Holy Land had become unfeasible. The latter factor can be seen in the concern caused within the Order by the wish of Grand Duke Gediminas of Lithuania voluntarily to accept Christianity as expressed in his letter to Pope John XXII in 1323: *LUB* 1/2, no. 687; Kaspars Kļaviņš, 'Vācu Ordeņa aizstāvības traktāts', *Latvijas vēsture* 4 (1994), 13–17 (here 14); Vilho Niitemaa, *Die undeutsche Frage in der Politik der livländischen Städte im Mittelalter* (Helsinki, 1949), pp. 43–45.

¹⁴ *Senās Latvijas vēstures avoti*, ed. Arveds Švābe, 2 vols (Riga, 1937), 1, nos 193, 204.

¹⁵ *Senās Latvijas vēstures avoti*, 1, no. 74.

the faith among them.¹⁶ Although such complaints have to be taken with a pinch of salt, as they were probably deliberately exaggerated to gain the attention of the Curia, their very existence is convincing evidence of the increasing disunity within the Christian camp, especially during the phase of implementation of the declared goal of the crusades: the conversion of the subjugated pagan populations.

Christendom versus Heathendom

The unity of Christendom in the face of non-Christians was taken for granted as part of the ideological background of the crusades. Christians who came to the Baltic region from the West were aware of having distinct common interests (although they may not have considered them constantly), while the awareness of common interests may also have been reduced by practical considerations. In a broader context even Henry of Livonia admits the unity of goals between Danes and Germans as fellow Christians, in the name of which Bishop Albert is ready for a compromise, because 'it seemed better to him [...] to go to the Danish king rather than to endanger the Livonian church'.¹⁷ Consequently, at least in theory, each Christian power in the eastern Baltic region could call upon the others for assistance in cases of military necessity, as demonstrated, for example, by the Treaty of Stensby (1238), according to which the Livonian Master of the Teutonic Order was entitled to mobilize vassals of the king of Denmark from Reval for its military campaigns against pagan Curonians and Semgallians.¹⁸ This practical unity of purpose was also clearly evident during the St George's Night rebellion of the Estonians in 1343, when the Teutonic Order put down the resistance of local converts at the request from the Danish authorities.

This is not to say that such co-operation – and for that matter the entire crusading effort in the Baltic – did not also spring from political and material interests. The Teutonic Order, for example, had material interests in the Estonian lands that they helped to bring back into the fold of Christendom. The Baltic conversion arena is not a unique example in history when religion is earnestly called upon to support practical arguments. In the minds of contemporaries religious motives were intertwined with material ones and did not conflict with each other. Indeed, the chroniclers, following the Christian tradition of the causal relationship between success and faith (deriving from the Old Testament where victories and prosperity go to pious rulers), present the material gains of Christians as a just reward, granted by God in return for worship or for serving His purpose.¹⁹

¹⁶ *Senās Latvijas vēstures avoti*, 1, no. 180.

¹⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIV.4, p. 173: *Et visum est [...] regem Dacie potius adire quam Lyvonensem ecclesiam periclitari*.

¹⁸ Indriķis Šterns, *Latvijas vēsture, 1180–1290: krustakari* (Riga, 2002), p. 331.

¹⁹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIII.7, p. 161; *Livländische Reimchronik*, trans. Bisenieks, lines 3343–45.

In Livonia, as in other crusading arenas, practical considerations often taught laymen to be tolerant towards non-Christians. Contrary to the ideal of a united Christian front against heathendom, occasionally one of the Christian powers recruited pagan allies against their fellow Christians, as was the case during the conflict between Riga and the Teutonic Order in 1297–1330, when the former sought assistance from the pagan Lithuanians.²⁰ Alliances with schismatics and heathens against the bishop of Riga was one of the abuses of Christian duty with which the Sword Brethren were charged in 1234.²¹ The *Rhymed Chronicle* even mentions the striking case of a Christian warrior joining the pagan side.²²

Yet religious ideals formed a dominant mental outlook, in which Christendom formed a whole and was irreconcilably opposed to paganism. Alliances of the political powers of Livonia with non-Christians against fellow Christians seem to have been regarded as something like treason towards Christendom. The alliance between the city of Riga and the Lithuanians in 1298 obliged the former to demonstrate a strong commitment to Christianize the latter and present this alliance as a tool towards that goal, or else face loss of reputation as well as opposition from other parts of Christendom. Thus a few months later Riga launched serious missionary efforts in order to justify the alliance with the Lithuanians. In March of the same year the town council, the dean of the cathedral chapter, the abbot of Dünamünde and the priors of the Dominican and Franciscan convents of Riga issued a document asserting their determination to Christianize the Lithuanians, while also trying to upgrade the status of their allies by underlining the favourable attitude of the Lithuanian ruler Mindaugas towards the Catholic Church and the long-standing co-operation between the two.²³

Even though practical considerations may have sometimes outweighed religious ideals, a common Christian identity was clearly a strong argument for Christians to feel obliged to support each other against the heathens.

Christian Views of Heathendom

Just as it was aware of its own common identity, Christendom regarded the pagans as a unitary whole. The Christians in the Baltic region did notice the ethnic differences among the various pagan tribes, and these must have been even more striking to missionaries who worked among them, such as the chronicler Henry himself. He occasionally compares pagan tribes in certain aspects and brings out some striking, albeit predominantly negative features of some of them, such

²⁰ LUB 1/1, no. 576.

²¹ *Senās Latvijas vēstures avoti*, 1, no. 204.

²² *Livländische Reimchronik*, trans. Bisenieks, lines 8630–34.

²³ LUB 1/1, no. 570; Gustavs Strenga, 'Dominikāņu un franciskāņu loma Rīgas pilsētās, arhibīskapa un Vācu Livonijas ordeņa konfliktā (1297–1330)', *Latvijas Vēsture* 4 (2003), 17–23 (here 21).

as ruthlessness or treachery.²⁴ As Henry served as a priest among the Letts, his special favour to that particular ethnic group has been much discussed and even put forward as an argument for his local origin. However, one can discern a clear and unsurpassable line of division between Christians and heathens, irrespective of their ethnic background:

Neither can there be one heart and soul nor a firm treaty of peace between Christians and pagans unless you accept with us the same yoke of Christianity and of perpetual peace and serve the one God²⁵

declares Henry, putting these words into the mouths of the Lettish converts. It is actually because of their willing conversion and loyalty to the Christian faith that he contrasts the Letts favourably with the other tribes. Yet in a broader context he places all pagans in the same category, reporting crusaders insisting that there is no difference between pagan Estonians and Livs and randomly changing the target of their planned attack.²⁶

In Christian ideology heathendom was clearly seen as a camp of irreconcilable enemies and worshippers of demons whom St Bernard of Clairvaux calls 'tyrannical foes', 'followers of the Prince of Darkness' and 'foes of the cross of Christ'.²⁷ Thus the author of the *Rhymed Chronicle* suggests that Lithuanian troops must have been commanded by the Devil himself, and while God helps his army, the Devil causes torment to pagans who fight for him.²⁸ Following the same tradition, Henry calls Lithuanians 'enemies of Christ' (Lat. *hostibus Christi*), 'enemies of the church' (as in the phrase *ecclesiam liberent ab inimicis*) and 'enemies of the Christ's name' (*inimicos nominis Christi*), and describes the conversion of Livs in the village of Sydegunde as 'the renunciation of the Devil and his works' (*diabolo et operibus eius abrenunciant*).²⁹

Following this logic, Christian ideology demanded the conversion of the heathen, since it was part of God's plan that all peoples should embrace the true faith; Christ himself had commanded, 'Go then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples' (Matthew 28.18–19). If they resisted conversion, as was

²⁴ Henry of Livonia, ch. XVIII.5, p. 119.

²⁵ Henry of Livonia, ch. XII.6, p. 64: *Sed neque inter christianos et paganos unum cor et una anima neque forma pacis firma esse poterit, nisi recepto nobiscum eodem iugo christianitatis et pacis perpetue, unum Deum colatis.*

²⁶ Henry of Livonia, ch. VII.2, pp. 19–20.

²⁷ Bernard of Clairvaux, 'In Praise of the New Knighthood', trans. Conrad Greenia, in *The Works of Bernard of Clairvaux, vol. 7: Treatises III* (Kalamazoo, Mich., 1977), 127–67.

²⁸ *Livländische Reimchronik*, trans. Bisenieks, lines 1426–47: *noch wen ich, / daz, sie der tûvel vûrte*; lines 2659–60: *alsus half got den vrûnden sin. / den heiden jêmerlîchen pin / gab der tûvel ûf der stat.*

²⁹ Henry of Livonia, ch. IX.3, p. 27, XI.5, p. 52, XI.6, p. 54, X.14, p. 45.

often the case in the eastern Baltic region, they were to be killed as enemies of God. Apostates, of whom there were many in Livonia, were regarded as even worse enemies. According to St Augustine, he who deserts the faith, and becomes an assailant, is worse than he who has not deserted the faith he never held.³⁰ According to Henry of Livonia, it was the apostasy of the Livish converts that induced Pope Celestine III to declare a crusade to their lands:

When the supreme pontiff heard how many had been baptized, he thought that they should not be deserted and decreed that they ought to be forced to observe the faith which they had freely promised. He granted, indeed, the remission of all sins to all those who would take the cross and go to restore that newly founded church.³¹

This attitude formed the ideological basis of the crusades against the Baltic heathen. From the Christian perspective, violence was part of the necessary set of conversion tools. The conversion of the Baltic pagans in most cases must have been a formal act of acceptance of new religious practices, and should be viewed as a separate phase from subsequent efforts of missionary teaching which required quite different methods.

The Identity of the Baltic Peoples and Modern Insights

Were the Baltic heathens at all aware of a common identity, or at least of a common purpose against Christendom?

The nationalistically oriented literature, which insists that the Baltic heathens were aware of a shared identity based on their aspirations to safeguard their liberty against the invaders, could be described as an example of historical anachronism that projects nationalism and the values of national liberty back to a period when such sentiments were still unknown. The theory that the Livonian tribes had been undergoing a unification process which was interrupted by external aggression,³²

³⁰ St Augustine, 'The City of God against the Pagans', ed. and trans. Philip Schaff, in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, First series, vol. 2 (Edinburgh, 1890), p. 472.

³¹ Henry of Livonia, ch. I.12, p. 7: *summus itaque pontifex, auditio numero baptizatorum, non eos deserendos censuit, sed ad observationem fidei, quam sponte promiserant, cogendos decrevit. Remissionem quippe omnium peccatorum indulsit omnibus qui ad resuscitandam illam primitivam ecclesiam accepta cruce transeant.*

³² For example, Šterns, *Latvijas vēsture*, pp. 233–34. The most eloquent advocate of this view was the famous Enlightenment author Garlieb Merkel (1769–1850) who, contemplating the conditions of the local ethnicities in his time, mourned their development potential which had been interrupted by the crusades: 'I am standing at the grave of a youth, killed by blood-thirsty plunderers before he had had time to realize even half of his

a historical model deriving from an outlook that viewed the development of a nation-state as the paramount achievement of an ethnic entity, has likewise been rejected by modern scholarship.³³

Christendom as one warring camp and heathendom as the other were comparable categories only from the perspective of medieval Christianity; such concepts would have been incomprehensible to contemporary Baltic heathens. The fundamental difference between the two competing forces was that Christianity is a universal religion and thus functioned as a uniting factor for its believers, while pagan beliefs and rites were local or regional in character; there was thus no ideological foundation on which to build an awareness of a shared purpose among the heathen peoples in the territory that would become Livonia. At the time of the crusades the identity of the Livonian populations, according to the Estonian historian Heiki Valk, still seems to have been locally determined, centring on their particular geographic location.³⁴

A further factor of disunity was the division of the eastern Baltic peoples into two unrelated linguistic families, with Finno-Ugrian languages spoken in the territory inhabited by the Estonians and Livs, and Baltic languages spoken by the various Lettish peoples, the Lithuanians and the Old Prussians.

Twelfth-century Livonia was dominated by ceaseless clashes among different political units that William Urban describes as an 'eternal, relatively bloodless petty warfare among neighbours'.³⁵ This was still evident in the crusade period. Thus, according to Henry of Livonia, the Semgallians 'were always hostile to the people of Treiden', while 'the Letts had often been devastated by the Lithuanians and always oppressed by the Livs', and in 1211 Letts from Beverin invaded

development potential.' Garlieb Merkel, *Die Vorzeit Lieflands: Ein Denkmahl des Pfaffen und Rittergeistes*, 2 vols (Berlin, 1807), 1: 23: 'Ich stehe an der Vahre eines Jünglings, den blutgierige Räuber mordeten, ehe er sich halb entwickelt konnte.'

³³ Švābe maintained that uninterrupted development would have led not to greater unity, but to increased separatism and alienation among the tribes in terms of language, faith and social systems: Arveds Švābe, *Latvju kultūras vēsture*, 2 vols (Riga, 1921), 1/2: 94–95. Andris Šnē, analysing the development of power structures in the Baltic, has come to the conclusion that irrespective of undeniable attempts to bring about the concentration of power, the existing material evidence gives no basis for believing that in the late Iron Age (at least in the eastern part of present-day Latvia) the centralization of power was successfully advancing towards state-building; on the contrary, chieftainship persisted as an alternative to a state: Andris Šnē, *Sabiedrība un vara: sociālās attiecības Austrumlatvijā aizvēstures beigās* (Riga, 2002), p. 364.

³⁴ Heiki Valk, 'The Distribution of Medieval/Post-Medieval Burial Grounds of Western and Eastern Estonia: Association with Villages, Manors and Parish Centres', in *Europeans or Not? Local Level Strategies on the Baltic Rim, 1100–1400 AD*, ed. Nils Blomkvist (Kalmar, 1999), pp. 215–30 (here 219–20).

³⁵ William Urban, *The Baltic Crusade of the Thirteenth Century* (London, 1979), p. 38.

Ugaunia and Saccala four times, killing all the men they could find and taking away all the women, horses and cattle.³⁶

With the arrival of the crusading forces, the Baltic tribes developed a tendency of resorting to them for assistance against their older enemies, particularly the Lithuanians. Henry of Livonia admits that it was because of the constant attacks from the Lithuanians and oppression on the part of Livs that the Letts living at Imera 'rejoiced over the coming of the priest', now hoping 'to be relieved and defended by the Germans'.³⁷ There was a natural tendency for tribes that had maintained their independence by the time of the crusades to vigorously oppose the invaders, while those that had lost their sovereignty (such as the Letts) not only surrendered to the Germans without much resistance, but in some cases asked for their protection, hoping to achieve greater rights and liberties than under their former lords.³⁸

Purposeful efforts to split the local tribes and set them against each other, which the nationalistically oriented literature has traditionally regarded as the reason why some tribes preferred to support the Christian troops rather than their pagan neighbours,³⁹ would have been a natural tactic of war. It is also true that converts were forced to fight in the ranks of the Christian army. Participation in the military campaigns of their new overlords was part of the duties that the Baltic converts had to accept along with the new faith. For example, in December 1207 the crusaders mobilized all the Livs and Letts along with the crusading troops, threatening absentees with a fine, and in the winter of 1211 the Germans 'called together the Livs and Letts from all the regions and forts and, by threatening to punish those who did not come and inculcating terror, collected a strong army'.⁴⁰

Šterns has calculated that between 1206, when the chronicle of Henry of Livonia first mentions the mobilization of the baptized Livs, until 1226, converts were forced to take part in at least thirty-six campaigns against their pagan neighbours, the Estonians being the most frequent target.⁴¹ Overall, in the twenty years of the episcopate of Albert von Buxhövdén, the converts from the present territory of Latvia were mobilized for no less than sixty expeditions against the

³⁶ Henry of Livonia, ch. X.10, p. 40: *Semigalli inimicocias semper habentes contra Thoredenses*; XV.7, pp. 94–98; XI.7, p. 55: *Lethonibus sepius vastati et a Lyvonibus semper oppresi*; XXIII.8, pp. 162–64.

³⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. XI.7, p. 55: *At illi gaudentes ad adventu sacerdotis [...] et per Theuthonicus sperantes relevari ac defendi*.

³⁸ Švābe, *Latvju kultūras vēsture*, pp. 88, 91.

³⁹ For example, Mugurēvičs, 'Priekšvārds', p. 25; Jānis Zutis, *Krievu un Baltijas tautu cīņas pret vācu agresiju* (Riga, 1948), p. 45.

⁴⁰ Henry of Livonia, ch. XI.5, p. 52; XIV.10, p. 83: *Convocaverunt Lyvones et Lethos de omnibus finibus et castris, et penam non venientibus comminantes et terrorem incutientes, collegerunt exercitum fortem*.

⁴¹ Šterns, *Latvijas vēsture*, p. 359.

heathen, of which approximately forty-five were directed against the Estonians.⁴² An agreement made with the Curonians in 1230 by the Riga cathedral chapter, the Sword Brethren and the citizens of Riga is one of the earliest pieces of evidence of the obligation imposed on the converts to fight against 'Christ's enemies' together with the crusaders.⁴³

In most cases it was unlikely that forays into the territories of traditional enemies in the company of strong allies were regarded by the local tribes as an unpleasant part of the Christian yoke. They were quite enthusiastic about military service, often going further than their new Christian duty obliged them to. Henry of Livonia writes, with a tinge of distaste, that 'the Livs and Letts, who are more cruel than the other nations, like the servant in the gospel, did not know how to show mercy', explaining that 'they killed countless people and slaughtered some of the women and children [...] They stained the streets and every spot with the blood of the pagans.'⁴⁴ In 1215 the Livs living along the River Aa urged Bishop Albert to proceed on a campaign to Curonia even before the Christian army was ready to consider it.⁴⁵ The Baltic populations thus clearly seem to have chosen their alliances on pragmatic considerations of survival and advantage, and an alliance with the Christians offered them strong support and protection. There was no reason why they should have regarded Christians as more dangerous enemies than their traditional foes, who had harassed and oppressed them for as long as they could remember.

It emerges from the chronicle of Henry of Livonia and, to a lesser extent, the *Rhymed Chronicle*, that the most feared enemy for the population of what became Livonia was the Lithuanians, rather than the crusaders. According to Henry, 'Lithuanians were then such lords over all the peoples, both Christian and pagan, dwelling in these lands, that scarcely anyone and the Letts especially, dared live in the small villages [...] and the Livs and Letts were food and provender for the Lithuanians and like sheep in the jaws of wolves, since they were without a shepherd.'⁴⁶ Indeed, Henry offers numerous examples of local tribes finding themselves incapable of dealing with the Lithuanian threat and resorting to the Christian armies for support as the only feasible solution, or at least, the lesser of two evils.⁴⁷ However, Švābe has found Henry's passionate dislike of the

⁴² Šterns, *Latvijas vēsture*, p. 224.

⁴³ Šterns, *Latvijas vēsture*, p. 230; *Senās Latvijas vēstures avoti*, no. 161.

⁴⁴ Henry of Livonia, ch. XVIII.5, p. 119: *Lyvones et Letthi, qui sunt crudeliores aliis gentibus, nescientes, tamquam servus ewangelicus, conservi sui misereri. Populum innumerabilem interfecerunt, et nonnullos ex mulieribus et parvulis voluerunt.[...] Et omnes vias et omnia loca sanguine paganorum colorantes.*

⁴⁵ Henry of Livonia, ch. XII.6, p. 62; XVIII.5, p. 117.

⁴⁶ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIII.4, p. 69: *Erant eciam tunc Lethones in tantum omnibus gentilibus in terris istis existentibus dominantes, tam christianis quam paganis, ut vix aliqui in villulis habitare auderent, et maxime Lethi.*

⁴⁷ For example, Henry of Livonia, ch. XI.2, p. 48; XII.2, pp. 58–59.

Lithuanians suspicious and explains it as a reflection of Bishop Albert's anti-Lithuanian policy.⁴⁸ The fact that the chronicler reserves epithets such as 'the enemies of Christ, of Christ's name and of the church' almost exclusively for the Lithuanians suggests that he may indeed have been prejudiced in this matter.⁴⁹ Modern historians seem to have taken Henry's anti-Lithuanian attitude at face value. For instance, Christiansen believes the Lithuanian threat to have been so great that the only real alternative to subjugation by the crusaders was subjugation by the Lithuanians.⁵⁰ Whether it is completely justified remains an open question. Another point for further research is to establish whether the constant Lithuanian and Russian threat from different directions may also have acted as a dividing factor among the native populations.

The eastern Baltic tribes had a different system of values from that of the historians of the subsequent centuries. Military success and welfare of a particular political unit without a thought for any common purpose shared with other peoples seems to have stood at the top of their list of priorities. The awareness of a fundamental change in the political situation which might conceivably suggest that they should suddenly make common cause with former enemies against a new foe, naturally took some time to crystallize as events developed. It would be historically anachronistic to expect from the individual eastern Baltic tribes a political insight that comes only once a pattern of events has been fully understood.

Changes in Pagan Attitudes towards the Christians

There were some instances of native inter-tribal co-operation against the Christian camp, although they do not give the impression of a consistent tendency. Thus in the summer of 1206 Livs attacked Riga together with the Lithuanians,⁵¹ while in the summer of 1210 Curonians and Livs joined forces and tried to summon assistance from the Estonians, Lithuanians, Semgallians and Russians for an attack on Riga.⁵² In 1222–23 a large-scale uprising, starting on the island of Ösel (mod. Saaremaa, Estonia), swept over all the areas inhabited by Estonians with

⁴⁸ According to Švābe, this policy was dictated by the bishop's aspirations to rule over the trade route along the Dūna, which was constantly under the threat of Lithuanian attacks: Arveds Švābe, 'Tālava', in *Straumes un avoti*, ed. L. Švābe, 3 vols (Riga, 1965), 3: 182; Švābe, 'Jersikas karaļvalsts', p. 14.

⁴⁹ It was probably because of similar political interests of Bishop Albert that the chronicler places Vsevolod, the Orthodox ruler of Gerzike, in the same category, remarking that 'he had always been an enemy of the Christian name, especially of the Latins' (Henry of Livonia, ch. XIII.4, p. 69): *Erat namque rex Vissewalde de Gercike christiani nominis et maxime Lattinorum semper inimicus*.

⁵⁰ Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades*, p. 126;

⁵¹ Henry of Livonia, ch. X.8, p. 37; X.12, p. 41.

⁵² Henry of Livonia, ch. XIV.5, p. 75.

the goal of 'expunging the Christian name from the land' (*nomen christianum de terra delerent*).⁵³ Such rebellious alliances again clearly sprang from pragmatic considerations. Often the result of military defeat, the formal act of conversion was inevitably accompanied by political subjugation and the imposition of new administrative measures such as tithes. Rebellions were the expression of the disappointment of the converts at the material burdens that were brought by baptism, or at their general standing under the new circumstances.

Moreover, as we have already observed, such attempts to present a more or less concerted front against the invaders came about primarily on the part of traditionally stronger and independent units, which had more to lose from subordination to the Christians. Also, the tendency of offering a broad co-ordinated resistance to the invaders was more typical among the Estonians than among their Livonian neighbours, while the Estonians in general had been better organized than the Livs and Letts even before the crusades.⁵⁴ The most famous and tragic example of such attempted deliberate common action is the Estonian rebellion of 1343, when the population of the entire present-day Estonia rose against their overlords. They had probably co-ordinated their plans with the Lithuanians, chosen the time of a restless situation in northern Christendom and summoned Swedish assistance, thus demonstrating a growing understanding of a shared purpose, which probably can be clearly discerned only from a distance in time.⁵⁵

Outbursts of discontent sometimes were triggered by some concrete injury done by the new lords. This was the case with the rebellion of the Letts of Autine in 1212, which, according to Henry of Livonia, resulted from a dispute with the Sword Brethren over some beehives.⁵⁶ However, the chronicler does not conceal the fact that this incident was merely the last straw, as he describes the unrest quickly spreading over a large territory and the initiative passing to the neighbouring Livs. He also reports the model convert Caupo admitting the justice of the cause of the Letts and Livs, and even, on the eve of these events, offering to talk to the bishop and ask for a mitigation of the duties demanded by the Christians.⁵⁷ Henry clearly saw the negative impact on the converts' loyalty to Christendom that was brought about by excessive material demands, which inevitably came in one package along with political and economic subjugation. Observing his own worst premonitions coming true, he repeatedly voiced his concern, both in his own name as well as in words which he placed in the mouth of the papal legate William of Modena,

⁵³ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXVI.3–9 (here 189).

⁵⁴ Manfred Hellmann, 'Sozialer und wirtschaftlicher Wandel in Alt-Livland im 14. Jahrhundert', in *Gesellschaftsgeschichte: Festschrift für Karl Bosl zum 80. Geburtstag*, 2 vols, ed. Ferdinand Seibt (München, 1988), 1: 227–48, (here 242).

⁵⁵ Bartolomäus Hoeneke, *Die jüngere Livländische Reimchronik 1315–1348*, ed. Konstantin Höhlbaum (Leipzig, 1872), pp. 19–31; Hellmann, 'Sozialer und wirtschaftlicher Wandel in Alt-Livland im 14. Jahrhundert', p. 243.

⁵⁶ Henry of Livonia, ch. XVI.3, pp. 104–108.

⁵⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. XVI.3, pp. 106–107.

implored the Christians to exercise moderation, and asking them 'not to impose any harsh, unbearable burden upon the shoulders of the converts, but rather the sweet and light yoke of the Lord'.⁵⁸ Although one can clearly observe serious missionary efforts on the part of pious enthusiasts (such as Henry himself) who were truly committed to the spreading and deepening of the faith in Livonia as the ultimate goal of the crusades, such admonitions obviously fell on deaf ears at that particular place and time; Christian ideals were inevitably distorted in the process of their implementation by ordinary sinful humans, and made Livonians reconsider their attitude towards their Christian lords. Thus it may be argued that in the course and aftermath of the crusades to Livonia, the local populations gradually began to realize that they had a common purpose and a common enemy.

Conclusions

In the course of the Baltic Crusades Christendom, whose ideological background included an awareness of a common purpose against heathendom, came into contact with local pagan populations which lacked any comparable belief of a common purpose against the invading Christians; in fact, whenever pragmatic considerations dictated it, the pagans eagerly made alliances with the Christians against their traditional enemies among their pagan neighbours.

In a broader sense it was the heathens' lack of awareness of a common purpose against the Christians that made them losers. Behind individual Christian armies stood all of Christendom, its religious zeal intertwined with material interests, pushing inexorably into Livonia. Lacking any such awareness of a common purpose, the eastern Baltic peoples were divided in the face of the onslaught of Christendom and pulled in different directions by varying political interests, making their defeat inevitable. The achievement of the goal of integrating Livonia into Christendom and the loss of a shared enemy deepened the cracks in the Christian camp in Livonia. The further history of Livonia was less and less in harmony with Christian ideals and this was not as happy a place for converts as enthusiastic missionaries, such as Henry of Livonia, hoped to see. It gave converts practical reasons to consider their shared plight and their subsequent history leaves an impression of a growing sense of common purpose among the Livonians, especially among the Estonians.

⁵⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIX.3, p. 209: *nec Theutonici gravaminis alicuius iugum importabile neophytorum humeris imponereut, sed iugum Domini Levi.*

Chapter 3

The Emergence of Livonia: The Transformations of Social and Political Structures in the Territory of Latvia during the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries

Andris Šnē

Introduction

The thirteenth century was the time when Western, Eastern and local cultures met in the eastern Baltic lands, a crossroads located on the eastern periphery of medieval Western civilization, but also within the sphere of influence and interests of Russian principalities. From the end of the twelfth century, missionaries from Germany began to preach the Roman Catholic faith on the eastern coast of the Baltic Sea, in the area later known as Livonia, corresponding to the present-day territories of Latvia and Estonia. These territories were inhabited by various heathen Baltic peoples (Lettgallians, Semgallians, Selonians and Curonians) and Finnic peoples (Livs and Estonians). An important role was played in the Baltic region from the middle of the twelfth century by the Hanseatic League, especially the towns of Lübeck and Visby, and so merchants and missionaries, and later aristocrats too, went eastwards side by side, but moved by different aims. Nowadays these activities of Western Christendom in Livonia, as well as in Prussia and Lithuania, are covered by the general term ‘Baltic Crusades’.¹

The crusade was a form of contact between different cultures and societies, involving conflict as well as peaceful co-operation and coexistence. Certainly, it was a meeting point of different worldviews. Yet the first regular contacts across the Baltic had already begun around 500 AD and the countries of the Baltic Rim had emerged after the late Viking Age in the tenth and eleventh centuries with many common features in social organization, mentality and material culture; thus the

¹ For general overviews in English, see Eric Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades: The Baltic and the Catholic Frontier, 1100–1525* (London, 1980); William Urban, *The Baltic Crusade* (DeKalb, 1975) and *The Livonian Crusade* (Washington, DC, 1981), as well as the recent historiographical survey by Sven Ekdahl, ‘Crusades and Colonisation in the Baltic: A Historiographic Analysis’, in *XIX Rocznik Instytutu Polsko-Skandynawskiego 2003/2004* (Copenhagen, 2004), pp. 1–42. In Latvian, the latest and most detailed account of the age of the crusades (although outdated in approach) is Indriķis Šterns, *Latvijas vēsture 1180–1290. Krustakari* (Rīga, 2002).

beginnings of the Christian mission and the crusade on the Baltic coast in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were not like the discovery of the New World. Nevertheless, at this time active and mutual interactions took place between Western Christian and local heathen cultures, worldviews and ideals, societies and individuals, which led to the new social, political and cultural situation in Livonia.

This transitional century in Livonia also left the first literary works that now serve as major historical records, such as the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia (*Heinrici Chronicon Livoniae*) and the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* (Ger. *Livländische Reimchronik*), as well as some documentary sources.² Therefore the thirteenth century in the Baltic also marked the transition from prehistoric, non-literary societies to a literate, medieval world. The rather one-sided perspective from the point of view of such sources relating to the crusaders is the reason why the present study of emerging medieval structures in the Baltic region will include the results of archaeological research as well as written sources in discussing the transformations of the social, political and cultural structures during the last centuries of prehistory and the first century of the Middle Ages (as previously defined) on the territories of present-day Latvia and Estonia. So we shall start (rather unusually in historical investigations of this period) with the study of local societies on the eve of the crusades and then turn our attention to the thirteenth-century innovations and adoptions resulting in the social and political transformations of power structures in the region.

Currently it is very popular to view the Baltic region as one of the frontiers of medieval Christendom, a region where the Western world expanded and one that was transformed by conquest, colonization and the cultural changes that accompanied Christianization.³ The main actors in the Christianization and conquest of Livonia were the aristocracy and merchants of northern Germany. Recent studies suggest that it was only from the pontificate of Honorius III (1216–27) that the Baltic crusades were recognized as equal to the crusades to the Holy Land; previously, papal policy in the Baltic region was driven by the local German powers, which were themselves directed by both ideological and economic factors.⁴ The first documented Christian missionaries arrived at the lower reaches of the rivers Dūna (mod. Daugava/Zapadnaya Dvina) and Aa (mod.

² Henry of Livonia, *Heinrici Chronicon* / *Indriķa hronika*, ed. Ēvalds Mugurēvičs (Rīga, 1993); *Livländische Reimchronik* / *Atskaņu hronika*, trans. Valdis Bisenieks, comm. Ēvalds Mugurēvičs and Kaspars Kļaviņš (Rīga, 1998).

³ See Robert Bartlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change 950–1350* (Princeton and London, 1993) and also the various contributions in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, ed. Alan V. Murray (Aldershot, 2001).

⁴ Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt, 'Pope Alexander III (1159–1181) and the Baltic Crusades', in *Medieval History Writing and Crusading Ideology*, ed. Tuomas M. S. Lehtonen and Kurt Villads Jensen (Helsinki, 2005), pp. 242–56. For detailed discussion of the role of papacy, see Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades, 1147–1254* (Leiden, 2007).

Gauja, Latvia) in 1186 under the leadership of Meinhard, an Augustinian friar from the monastery of Segeberg in Holstein.⁵ From that time the Europeanization of the territories of Latvia and Estonia took the forms both of confrontation and gradual coexistence, as these regions became drawn into the sphere of Western culture and Christianity.

Scholars of the Baltic Crusades have differentiated between two types of conversion in Livonia: an early, peaceful mission involving preaching by clerics, followed by violent conversion in the form of the crusades. This assumption about an early, peaceful mission needs to be reconsidered. As the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia shows, Meinhard was ready to organize military activities when he realized that his missionary attempts had failed: only death put a stop to his project. The move to a crusading policy came with the third bishop of Riga, Albert von Buxhövdn (1199–1229) and the establishment of Riga as the main base of the crusade on the frontier. It was the permanent presence of colonists, merchants and crusaders that marked the real change in the character of early missionary activities and crusades in Livonia, rather than the use of force as opposed to peaceful preaching.⁶ Another factor was that from the early thirteenth century the conquest of Livonia became an international undertaking. Before going to Livonia after his appointment, Albert went to Gotland where he was able to gather about 500 men ‘with the cross’ but later turned towards Denmark where he received support from the king, noblemen and bishops. Afterwards he managed to obtain the support of Philip of Swabia, king of Germany (1198–1208) and many pilgrims from Germany.⁷ He did not arrive in Livonia until the summer of 1200, but he was accompanied by two dukes and many crusaders.⁸

Albert von Buxhövdn laid the foundations of medieval Livonia in the first quarter of the thirteenth century. In 1202 he established a local religious order of knights, known as the Sword Brethren, as the military basis of his political strategies. By 1206 the Livs of the Düna region had been subjected, while the majority of the Lettgallians were converted during the first decade of the thirteenth century, soon to be followed by the Estonians. The western part of Livonia was conquered in the second half of the thirteenth century when the Teutonic Order (which had incorporated the remains of the Sword Brethren after the battle of Saule in 1236) joined the Christian forces on the Baltic frontier. In 1267 the Curonians were subjected and five years later the Semgallians, too, accepted the new order.

⁵ See Henry of Livonia, ch. I, pp. 46–53 for the account of his missionary attempts in the lands of the Livs.

⁶ Carsten Selch Jensen, ‘The Early Stage of Christianisation in Livonia in Modern Historical Writings and Contemporary Chronicles’, in *Medieval History Writing and Crusading Ideology*, pp. 207–15 (here 213).

⁷ Henry of Livonia, III.2, pp. 56–59.

⁸ Henry of Livonia, IV.1, pp. 58–59; Torben K. Nielsen, ‘Mission and Submission. Societal Change in the Baltic in the Thirteenth Century’, in *Medieval History Writing and Crusading Ideology*, pp. 216–31.

A subsequent uprising by the Semgallians lasted until 1290, marking the end of a hundred years of the crusades in Livonia. Some scholars have argued that, taking into account the regional political situation and the main political actors, the native peoples of Livonia had only two real choices: to be subjected to the Lithuanians or to the Teutonic Order and the Roman Catholic bishops.⁹ And so the Baltic region was incorporated into Western Christendom during the thirteenth century and the local prehistoric societies of the Baltic and Finnic peoples were replaced by new crusader states with hierarchical societies.

Social and Political Organization on the Eve of the Crusades

The last centuries of prehistory in the territory of present-day Latvia and Estonia (from the ninth until the end of the twelfth century, corresponding to the Late Iron Age in archaeological periodization) can be considered as the best researched period in archaeological terms due to the number of extensive excavations. The evidence of material culture obtained from this period thus provides major opportunities to interpret social dynamics.¹⁰ Unfortunately we still have to deal with the whole period under question, rather than partial periods, as the detailed chronology of the sites and artefacts is still in progress, although some tendencies peculiar to the twelfth century may be discerned.

The general anthropological and archaeological schemes of social evolution have described complex societies as chiefdoms and early states.¹¹ Of course, these very general terms do not describe social relations in practice, so they can only be used as a point of departure for more detailed study of the way in which societies existed. These concepts nevertheless provide a framework for orientation both in the social structures of past societies and in the criteria for interpreting material culture.

⁹ See, for example, Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades*, p. 126.

¹⁰ However, material culture too has its limits, since it does not contain information about verbal communication. Thus, an individual associated with material culture of supposedly low social rank, may in reality belong to the upper stratum of society.

¹¹ Among the studies widely used in archaeology and social history are, for example, Morton Fried, *The Evolution of Political Society: an Essay in Political Anthropology* (New York, 1967); Jonathan Friedman and Michael Rowlands, 'Notes Towards an Epigenetic Model of the Evolution of "Civilization"', in *The Evolution of Social Systems*, ed. Jonathan Friedman and Michael Rowlands (London, 1977), pp. 201–76; D. Blair Gibson and Michael N. Geselowitz, 'The Evolution of Complex Society in Late Prehistoric Europe: Toward a Paradigm', in *Tribe and Polity in Late Prehistoric Europe: Demography, Production, and Exchange in the Evolution of Complex Social Systems*, ed. D. Blair Gibson and Michael N. Geselowitz (New York, 1988), pp. 3–37; Allen W. Johnson and Timothy Earle, *The Evolution of Human Societies: From Foraging Group to Agrarian State* (Stanford, 1987); Elman R. Service, *Primitive Social Organization* (New York, 1962) and *Origins of the State and Civilization* (New York, 1975).

The understanding of the term 'chiefdom' has changed a great deal since it was introduced into Western anthropological and later also archaeological literature in the middle of the twentieth century. Some researchers have included chiefdoms among intermediate societies,¹² while others have considered them as a kind of tribal form of social organization.¹³ Overall, the term is widely used to characterize a very broad range of societies somewhere between segmentary societies and early states, and this very broad range has led to very different classifications of chiefdoms.¹⁴ In these evolutionary schemes, the chiefdom is used as a description for complex pre-state and pre-industrial societies that are regional polities with characteristic features such as economic specialization, a high level of production, an economy involving prestige goods, monumental buildings, redistribution of material resources, and a political hierarchy of sites and persons. During recent decades, one can trace a move from an emphasis on economic features to administrative and decision-making elements in the characterization of chiefdoms. Nevertheless, the main features of chiefdoms that have been identified are kin-based social and political structures and the personal character of power of the political leaders, who could achieve a higher social and political position in the community as a result of particular personal skills. These leaders were first among equals, and the commoners generally had the choice of not following their laws and demands.

Scholars have interpreted the relationship between chiefdoms and early states quite variously, either stressing the similarities in social dynamics of both these kinds of societies, or, by contrast, emphasizing the crucial differences between these kinds of social and political organization. Some decades ago, on the basis of worldwide comparative studies, a group of features were singled out that were held to be characteristic of early states: a sufficient population to provide social stratification (involving at least three social strata); centralized government with the power to maintain laws with the help of authority, military force or threats; independence of the state territory from other powers; economic specialization; production providing a regular surplus used to maintain state institutions; and a

¹² Jeanne E. Arnold, 'Organizational Transformations: Power and Labor among Complex Hunter-Gatherers and Other Intermediate Societies', in *Emergent Complexity: The Evolution of Intermediate Societies*, ed. Jeanne E. Arnold (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1996), pp. 59–73.

¹³ Lotte Hedeager, *Iron Age Societies: From Tribe to State in Northern Europe, 500 BC to AD 700* (Oxford, 1992); Kristian Kristiansen, 'Chiefdoms, States, and Systems of Social Evolution', in *Chiefdoms: Power, Economy, and Ideology*, ed. Timothy K. Earle (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 16–43; Kristian Kristiansen, *Europe before History* (Cambridge, 1998).

¹⁴ Timothy K. Earle, 'The Evolution of Chiefdoms', in *Chiefdoms: Power, Economy, and Ideology*, pp. 1–15; Earle, *How Chiefs Come to Power: The Political Economy in Prehistory* (Stanford, 1997).

collective ideology that legitimizes the ruling power.¹⁵ But, above all, the emergence of the state is characterized by institutionalization of power, inequality in access to resources and a decreasing importance of kin ties, to be replaced by territorial and political relations among the representatives of the state. These developments form the most essential transformation from a kin-based society to a society with institutionalized government, which is not a long-lasting process, although various circumstances and conditions might prepare the ground for the formation of a state society even over a period of several centuries. The transition from a pre-state social and political organization to an actual state is quite brief; it might end successfully with the creation of state structures or, equally, it might fail.

During recent decades archaeologists and anthropologists have worked hard to establish various criteria for recognizing particular types of social organization on the basis of material culture. Features have been found that are characteristic of different social and political structures in settlement patterns and structures, grave inventories and sites of economic activities, among other features. In late prehistoric societies on the present territory of Latvia, social status and power positions are evidenced primarily by material from habitation sites and cemeteries, since other kinds of archaeological sites have been poorly surveyed or rarely subjected to research.

Social structures and relations are realized only in the spatial dimension; control over space lies at the centre of social power. Thus, relations between space and society are closely linked and mutually dependent. Spatial organization reflects social organization and social relations; it also regulates social relations by forming the space of being.¹⁶ Analyses of social space consider the presence or absence of particular social areas, as well as areas used for different activities, public improvements, the proportion of different buildings, the distribution of buildings and their layout, access to buildings and the proportion of built and non-built areas. On the territorial level, the study of social space is connected with the identification of centres (or rather central areas) and their hinterland. Hillforts in late prehistoric Latvia are often viewed as centres, as these were the most important defensive structures. The emergence and spread of hillforts was closely connected with warfare and militarism as early as the Bronze Age, while during later prehistory these sites would have had additional developed functions. The existence of hillforts should not be viewed only in military terms; impressive fortification sometimes might be more a feature of military weakness than of power, while also constituting a symbol of prosperity. At the beginning of the Late Iron

¹⁵ Henri J. M. Claessen, 'The Early State: A Structural Approach', in *The Early State*, ed. Henri J. M. Claessen and Peter Skalnik (Den Haag, 1978), pp. 533–96.

¹⁶ For theoretical discussion of social space see, for example, Ole Grøn, 'A Method for Reconstruction of Social Organization in Prehistoric Societies and Examples of Practical Application', in *Social Space: Human Spatial Behaviour in Dwellings and Settlements*, ed. Ole Grøn, Ericka Engelstad and Inge Lindblom (Odense, 1991), pp. 100–117; Bill Hillier and Julienne Hanson, *The Social Logic of Space* (Cambridge, 1984).

Age, impressive rebuilding and extension work was carried out at many hillforts and settlements, including the strengthening or creation of fortifications and the extension of plateaux. However, it should be remarked that the only difference between hillforts and settlements lies in the geographical location and impressive fortifications of the hillforts; otherwise, the two kinds of site are similar, and both could have served as centres for some functions.

Intrasite spatial organization at late prehistoric dwelling sites in Latvia is quite difficult to study, since the structures have often not been preserved, or else have been disturbed or destroyed by later rebuilding or farming activities. One can discern a tendency towards increasing density of buildings on hillforts towards the end of the prehistoric period, so that by the end of the Late Iron Age, buildings were usually also situated in the central areas of hillfort plateaux (for example, on Daugmale hillfort). An intensive, but less dense layout of buildings can also be seen in the settlements, where there was no lack of open space. The size and appearance of buildings was determined by both economic and social factors. The sizes of houses are similar on all settlements, generally varying within the limits of 15–22 m² (2–4 × 3–5 metres).¹⁷ No major differences can be seen in terms of the size, appearance or functional separation of buildings at different sites or within the same sites.¹⁸ Thus, the construction of social space reflects a fairly egalitarian society during later prehistory, changing slightly in the eleventh and twelfth centuries towards a more complex organization. But it is impossible to detect any social group of particular status manifested in the spatial dimension.

The absence of hierarchical spatial organization does not necessarily mean the absence of social leadership, so this evidence must be viewed in conjunction with the material from burials. The obvious and quite banal statement that the deceased cannot bury themselves should be the starting point in the interpretation of the social context of burials.¹⁹ The deceased is prepared for the funeral by contemporaries, who consider the context of death, the interests of society and the individuality of the deceased. Thus, the funeral is a realization of socio-political decisions, manipulating the body of the deceased in the interests of the community,

¹⁷ Andris Šnē, *Sabiedrība un vara: Sociālās attiecības Austrumlatvijā aizvēstures beigās* (Rīga, 2002), table 2.

¹⁸ The only exception among building remains in late prehistoric Latvia is a building uncovered on Tanīskalns hillfort, with an area of more than 230 m² [see *Izrakumi Raunas Tanīsa kalnā 1927. gadā*, ed. Francis Balodis et al. (Rīga, 1928)], but this is probably a question of faulty methodology.

¹⁹ On the archaeology of death and burial, see Christopher Carr, 'Mortuary Practices: Their Social, Philosophical-Religious, Circumstantial, and Physical Determinants', in *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 2 (1995), 105–200; *The Archaeology of Death*, ed. Robert Chapman, Ian Kinnes and Klaus Randsborg (Cambridge, 1981); Elen J. Pader, *Symbolism, Social Relations and the Interpretation of Mortuary Remains* (Oxford, 1982); Michael Parker Pearson, *The Archaeology of Death and Burial* (Phoenix Mill, 1999).

and both the social position of the deceased and the status of the participants of the funeral determine the burial ritual. Although religious and social aspects are closely connected in burial rites, some funeral traditions are more concerned with either one or the other sphere. For example, burials in the cemeteries of the Livs were arranged quite strictly following a north-west orientation, so this feature of burials seems to be connected with religious aspects and tradition and may be related to gender differences only in particular cases. Similar conclusions apply to the grave layout, which in late prehistoric cemeteries is quite uniform.

From the point of view of social inequality, it seems useful to look at two elements of burials: the way the dead are buried and the composition of grave goods. The practices of cremation and inhumation, as well as flat and barrow burials, were all in use during later prehistory. In Livish cemeteries, for example, cremations comprise up to a third of the burials (and sometimes, particularly in the cemeteries of the Gauja Livs, the figure is higher – up to fifty per cent), and date mostly from the tenth and eleventh centuries. In Lettgallian cemeteries, cremations are very rare, usually comprising up to eight to ten per cent. Judging from the artefacts found in cremation graves, the proportion of cremations decreased towards the end of the Late Iron Age. Both cremations and inhumation graves can be found in flat as well as barrow cemeteries. It seems that, in view of the expenditure of time, material and effort put into organizing cremation burials, they may be regarded as being connected with some particular social position of the deceased and its ideological manifestation. But we may assume that other time-consuming burial constructions, namely barrows, reflect cultural tradition rather than social differentiation as they are not distributed among all of the local cultures.

Much attention has been given to grave goods as indicators of social and wealth position, often leading to the exclusion in social studies of other aspects of burials and cemeteries. The character of grave goods is determined, among other circumstances, by regional differences, and we also have to take into account the conditions of preservation. Usually, it is burials at opposite poles that attract the attention of researchers, namely those with rich grave goods and those lacking this feature. Those with rich grave goods have been interpreted quite differently, being regarded variously as indicating the burials of honourable or wealthy people, or as an expression of fear; that is to say that people presented to the deceased everything of the best in an attempt to protect themselves from his or her return. Thus, probably every case of burial incorporated different aspects of relations between individual and society, but there is no rule for the interpretation of these burials, and both the symbolic value of artefacts placed in burials (which is unknown to us today) and the relativity of the term 'rich burials' (since rich burials may differ between central and peripheral cemeteries) are both factors to be considered. Burials without grave goods are not a very widespread phenomenon in late prehistoric cemeteries in Latvia. Usually at least a knife and some beads were placed in the grave. For example, at Laukskola cemetery (610 excavated burials from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries) very few burials belong to the class of graves which are unfurnished, but show no evidence of having been disturbed.

Sometimes such graves are located on the periphery of the cemetery. It does not seem reasonable to connect these graves with Christian burials on the assumption that burials of Christians would not contain (or include only few) grave goods. Rather, these are probably burials of slaves or persons who had lost the support of their families and ended their lives in solitude.

Although they are very important, it is not easy to distinguish material symbols indicating status, wealth and power. These factors were not identical, some artefacts reflecting power and status, while others indicated wealth and status. We will not go into a more detailed discussion here, but it seems that among status symbols it is possible to consider double-edged swords, battle-axes, neck-rings for males, certain pendants and brooches.²⁰ In different centuries, these artefacts had different meanings, which also depended on the location of the habitation (as those sites situated close to the waterways had more opportunities to obtain some imported item of prestige). But it seems that the use of virtually all imported artefacts, or those mentioned above, was not strictly limited to a narrow circle of people, since these occur among burials with different numbers of artefact types. Thus, status was not institutionalized and/or inherited; everyone had some opportunity to change his or her position.

So the construction of social space at dwelling sites and social manifestations in burials show that late prehistoric societies in Latvia were largely organized on egalitarian principles, while differences in social and economic positions can be demonstrated according to the type of burial and its associated artefacts. Individuals had to compete intensively for status positions and work hard to keep them, since it was easy to lose status; but small and rather egalitarian societies are also open to socio-political changes that depend on both objective circumstances and subjective individual agents, who aim to obtain authority and power in different ways. Status and power were personal attributes; they could be obtained as well as lost in competition. And neither ethnic nor individual social identity was of the greatest importance in prehistory; people belonged to a particular family and this was the cornerstone of the identity of any person, on which he or she could rely. Late prehistoric societies seem to have been stable and strong enough, and there were probably only particular individuals who attempted to overcome the traditional limitations and framework of society in order to obtain a position which increased their power. Such attempts during the age of the crusades are described in the written sources of the thirteenth century, for example, the well-known case of Caupo, the chief of the Thoreyda Livs.²¹

²⁰ Šnē, *Sabiedrība un vara*, pp. 283–334.

²¹ For the case of Caupo see Nielsen, 'Mission and Submission'; Andris Šnē, 'Vara, kristietība un cilvēks lībiešu sabiedrībā 12.–13. gs. sākumā', in *Kristietības ienākšana Līvzemē: Zinātniska konference, veltīta Krimuldas baznīcas astoņsimtgadei 2005. gada 9 jūnijā*, ed. Līgita Beitiņa (Turaide, 2005), pp. 29–34.; Indriķis Šterns, 'Kaupo – Senlatvijas trimdinieks', *Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis* 3 (1998), 12–13; Guntis Zemītis, 'Kaupo

It is often unclear whether positions of power were inherited or achieved via personal skills and abilities. The *Chronicon Livoniae* of Henry of Livonia, for example, gives some evidence about the inheritance of power when describing the crusader attack on the town of Gerzike (mod. Jersika, Latvia) in 1209.²² Looking back at the town, which had been set on fire by the crusaders, Vissewalde (Viswaldis), the chief of Gerzike, who is referred to as *rex* (king), expresses his emotions, crying with grief; the chronicler attributes to him the words that he had inherited Gerzike from his fathers and that his people had lived there. It seems that Vissewalde, who had been born in Gerzike and grew up there, had been successful enough in politics and warfare to form a coalition of local societies under his leadership in order to confront the crusaders. This power would have been based on his own personality and kinship relations with the Lithuanians (his wife was of Lithuanian origin) for, as we have seen above, there is no archaeological evidence proving the presence of strong and inherited power in the lands of the Lettgallians. Of course, the remains of material culture are mute concerning inheritance, and there are only indirect indications, such as the ideological egalitarianism represented in burials and habitations as described above.

The *Chronicon Livoniae*, that inexhaustible source for the early Baltic mission, also contains information about social power in local societies of the early thirteenth century. Henry pictures the local communities as hierarchical societies, and while the common people are left anonymous, several members of the upper social stratum are named and characterized. He also differentiates between the leaders in the terminology he uses to refer to them. The most common term for members of the elite is *seniores* (elders), which is used to refer to *Russinus de castro Sotecele*, *Waridote de Autine*, *Talibaldus de Beverin* and certain others, such as those members of society who provided hostages to the crusaders.²³ Sometimes the elders arranged collective meetings to resolve questions such as the attitude to take towards the first Christian missionaries.²⁴ So these were probably the leaders, the chiefs of the local communities, who took the most important decisions relating to the whole community.

Henry of Livonia is very careful in his use of the term *rex* (king). Thus, the term *rex magnus* (great king) is used to refer to the rulers of Kiev, Novgorod and Polotsk (mod. Polatsk, Belarus), while the ruler of Pskov, who was subordinate to Novgorod, is simply called a king, without the qualifying adjective. The only local political leader to be characterized as a king in the Chronicle is Vissewalde. He is *rex de Gercike*, who has his own kingdom (*regnum*); his wife is queen (*regina*), he rules over his kin and people (*gens* and *populus*) and resides in his

– nodevējs vai laikmeta pretrunu upuris?', *Latvijas Zinātņu Akadēmijas Vēstis* 11–12 (1995), 27–33.

²² Henry of Livonia, ch. XIII.4, pp. 128–30.

²³ For example, Henry of Livonia, ch. XII.6, pp. 118–19.

²⁴ Henry of Livonia, ch. II.10, pp. 56–57.

castle (*castrum Gercike*) and is also the leader of military forces (*dux exercitus*).²⁵ At the same time, there were evidently several persons of the same or at least a similar social and political position who are not, however, referred to as kings. Thus, Vesthard, leader of the Semgallians, is a man of high-born status (*major natu*) and prince (*princeps*), while in the late thirteenth-century *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* he is called a king (MHG *Vester den konic*).²⁶ The same goes for the ruler of Kokenhusen (mod. Koknese, Latvia), Vetseke; in Henry's *Chronicle* he is a king or a minor king (*rex, regulus*), while the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* gives him the title king (MHG *konig*).²⁷ The leader of Tolowa, whose territory included the northern regions of the Lettgallians close to the Estonian lands, was Thalibald, who was also the elder of his castle at Beverin (*senior de Beverin*) and of his province of Trikata. In Tolowa, several districts were ruled by his sons,²⁸ so that Thalibald may have inherited his status, with the whole region being under the control of his kin.

Thus, according to Henry of Livonia, local societies at the time of the crusades were organized like states with a strong centralized power, with the exception of some regions where only hierarchical rule is mentioned. Yet as the analyses of material culture have shown, it is impossible to find features of state organization before the crusades, since there is no archaeological evidence that any centralization of power in the direction of state organization occurred in the present territory of Latvia during the Late Iron Age, contrary to what has often been suggested in archaeological and historical studies.²⁹ Rather, the opposite was the case: the chieftdom was retained as a potential alternative organization to the state. To bring about changes in the constitution of society and power relations there was a necessity for the presence of both favourable objective circumstances (including the capacity of society to undergo such transformations) and certain agents, that is active individuals working in their own subjective interests. It is certain that late prehistoric societies involved at least some ambitious agents, and the Viking Age as well as the following century provided major opportunities for them to show their fortune and skills in military and economic spheres of life. Actually, it might be supposed that by the end of the Viking Age, around the eleventh century, these

²⁵ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIII.4, pp. 128–31, XVIII.4, pp. 188–89.

²⁶ Henry of Livonia, ch. IX.2, pp. 72–73, X.10, pp. 90–91, XXIX.4, pp. 314–15; *Livländische Reimchronik*, trans. Bisenieks, line 1700.

²⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. XI.8–9, pp. 110–11; *Livländische Reimchronik*, trans. Bisenieks, line 653.

²⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. XVIII.3, pp. 186–87.

²⁹ For the study of the formation and meaning of 'the myth of the ancient Latvian state' in Latvian history since the early twentieth century, see Andris Šnē, 'Understanding Power: On the Study of Late Prehistoric Social and Political Structures in Latvia', in *Culture and Material Culture: Papers from the First Theoretical Seminar of the Baltic Archaeologists (BASE) Held at the University of Tartu, Estonia, October 17th–19th, 2003*, ed. Valter Lang (Tartu, 2005), pp. 53–70.

opportunities decreased. In any case, the general situation and circumstances did not favour the ambitions of agents for power and authority. Probably, military means allowed particular individuals to distinguish themselves (so that we might term the late prehistoric societies as 'militarized societies'), while economic aspects also played a role, and among these control over long-distance trade or at least participation in these activities would have been significant, as was the case with the chiefs of Daugmale, for example. But neither military nor economic power was enough to maintain and consolidate power: it was also necessary to change ideology and control it. And this aspect was still strong enough to prevent attempts to change the social order. It seems that society itself was not ready to break with traditional relations based on the ideology of collective egalitarianism, and the inability to break this ideology perhaps did not allow the formation of new power arrangements. Thus, it is not surprising that certain individuals – active agents such as Caupo, whose life-story is illuminated by some remarks in Henry's Chronicle – turned to Christianity in the early stage of the crusades, in the hope of using this new and quite different ideology for their own purposes.

The Formation of the States of Livonia: Conquest and Conversion

Having gained an impression of the local social and political structures, we can turn to the situation during the age of the crusades. The early mission brought with it the establishment of new church structures in Livonia. In 1186 Meinhard was ordained as the first bishop in the eastern Baltic region, which received its first archbishopric, at Riga, in 1255. In the meantime several other bishoprics had been founded, while some had been abolished in the first half of the thirteenth century, but a powerful state emerged in the lands of the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order. So it took about seventy years to form state structures and organization in the territory of Livonia. Livonia is often labelled a confederation of states, but we should note that there were no official federative ties among the different states. They often acted jointly, but each state maintained its independence (including the small bishopric of Curonia where there was a very strong influence of the Order). It is also popular, although not quite correct, to consider Livonia as a German colony in the Middle Ages.³⁰ It would be more accurate to say that the High Middle Ages saw a dissemination of different forms of social and cultural features of Christendom in Livonia, rather than the extension of the forms of political, social and economic dependency.

The frontier areas of medieval Christendom were subjected to social, political and cultural changes as a result of the contact of different cultures in the course of the mission and conquest. William Urban notes that in Livonia, the newly established Christian society did not disturb the life of the native people for more

³⁰ On the idea of colonialism in the medieval Baltic region, see Ekdahl, 'Crusades and Colonisation', pp. 9–10.

than two centuries, apart from forcing some of them to resettle in border areas threatened by the Russians and Lithuanians and abolishing paganism.³¹ There was no disappearance of entire ethnic groups or cultures in Livonia, as occurred in the case of the Prussians as a result of their assimilation within German society and culture. Yet the newcomers still had to attempt to establish and legitimize their power over the eastern Baltic lands as well as to organize their relations with the local power structures.

Among the first steps in converted areas were appointments of magistrates and priests to secure both legal and ideological control. The new, although still provisional, administrative system was fixed by the 1230s.³² Torben K. Nielsen remarks that the introduction of the system of advocates (MHG *vogete*, Lat. *advocatus*) was a great success of the crusaders in the first years of Livonian Christendom.³³ Yet later in the villages there were still local authorities that functioned as judges and chiefs, thus in some way continuing pre-crusade traditions.³⁴ The traditional laws of the native peoples with minor additions of Christian legislation had been fixed and issued for three regions of Livonia during the thirteenth century: their names have not survived, but they are generally known as the codices or laws of peasants of the Riga bishopric (or the Lettgallians), of the Livs and of the Curonians and Semgallians.³⁵ These laws were established to organize the social and economic life of the natives and to fix legal norms and structures among countryside communities, while seeming to preserve local traditions. After the conquest the natives did not lose their personal freedom or inheritance rights, their rights to move, to keep and bear arms, to possess moveable and immoveable property, or rights to participate in trade; they also kept their local municipalities and the right to appeal to magistrates.

The natives were involved also in the system of landholding that emerged in the early thirteenth century. Feudo-vassalic ties were introduced to the eastern Baltic region, but vassals there included representatives of social groups other than the nobles, such as craftsmen, rich peasants and also the natives, who in the sources are known as *Undeutsche*. The introduction of systems of fiefs was based to a significant extent on local individuals, since during the thirteenth century most of the vassals were natives while in the fourteenth century there were twenty-eight manors belonging to natives. Only in the fifteenth century was the number of manors held by descendants of crusaders greater than that held by natives.³⁶

³¹ William Urban, 'The Frontier Thesis and the Baltic Crusade', in *Crusade and Conversion*, pp. 45–71 (here 62).

³² Tiina Kala, 'The Incorporation of the Northern Baltic Lands into the Western Christian World', in *Crusade and Conversion*, pp. 3–20 (here 3).

³³ Nielsen, 'Mission and Submission', p. 221.

³⁴ Indriķis Šterns, *Latvijas vēsture 1290–1500* (Rīga, 1997), pp. 519–39.

³⁵ For the legal texts, see *Latvijas tiesību avoti. Teksti un komentāri, 1: Seno paražu un Livonijas tiesību avoti 10. gs. – 16. gs.*, ed. Edgars Melķiņš (Rīga, 1998), pp. 26–45.

³⁶ Šterns, *Latvijas vēsture 1290–1500*, pp. 432–518.

A particular status close to that of freeholders was attributed to several inhabitants in different regions of Livonia (at Salaspils, Tukums and Kudiga); in the registers of fiefs they are named as *konyngn* ('kings') and kept their privileges for several centuries (some of them even until the eighteenth century). They held their fiefs on the same legal basis and the same privileges as vassals of German origin, and their duties were close to those of the Order's knights; some of them were also free of the payment of taxes and labour duties.³⁷

Economic production in Livonia was mostly in the hands of the native people, with the exception of the towns, where crafts were restricted to Germans. However, in the countryside, where the bulk of production took place, the main producers were the native class of peasants. In fact there were differences between the lands of the Teutonic Order and the lands of the archbishopric of Riga and the bishoprics. In the former there was no highly developed system of fiefs and the social stratum of the vassals was very small, and so agriculture did not see important changes until the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; for example, the same type of ploughshare was used before and after the crusades.³⁸ Agrarian structures changed very slowly, and for several hundred years the native peasants were free and their relations with the lords remained purely economic until the strict legal and political controls that came about with the establishment of serfdom in the early fifteenth century.

The main force of conquest in Livonia was the knights who for the most part originated in northern Germany. However, the newly converted lands of Livonia were quite distant from Germany, and so they escaped the agrarian colonization of Germans that characterized Prussia and much of Eastern Central Europe. The Baltic Crusades brought a certain demographic decline to several regions of Livonia, for example in the lands of the Semgallians where an increase in population can only be found in the second half of the fifteenth century and the sixteenth century.³⁹ The Curonians, who had kept much of their original administrative structure, were involved in migrations to the south and south-east after 1260; only in the north-western areas of Latvia did the settlements and hillfort habitations survive unchanged until the establishment of manors during the fifteenth century.⁴⁰ Yet it is also necessary to point out that it is often possible to follow a continuity in burial grounds, as Late Iron Age cemeteries were also used in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and later. This indicates that the conquest was not followed by a total break

³⁷ Šterns, *Latvijas vēsture 1290–1500*, pp. 462–69; Agris Dzenis, 'Vietējas izcelsmes lēņa vīri Kurzemes un Zemgales hercogistē', *Ventspils Muzeja Raksti*, vol. 5 (Rīga, 2006), pp. 70–88.

³⁸ Ēvalds Mugurēvičs, 'Vidus- un Austrumlatvija 13.–14.gs.', *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija* 10 (1973), 27–39.

³⁹ Rasa Banyte-Rowell, Zane Buža, Jānis Ciglis et al., *Zemgaļi senatnē: Žiemgaliai senoveje* (Rīga, 2003), pp. 101–103.

⁴⁰ Jānis Asaris, 'Pilskalnu loma Kurzemes viduslaiku centru izveidē', *Ventspils Muzeja Raksti* 2 (2002), 119–27 (here 121); Vladas Žulkus, *Kuršiai: Baltijos jūros erdveje* (Klaipėda, 2004), pp. 193–206.

in settlement patterns, but rather that habitation was unaffected by it and continued at the same sites. However, this evidence relates to countryside settlements that were generally far from the main routes and centres that had been transformed by new elements such as castles and towns which were previously unknown in the Baltic lands.

Castles built of stone were introduced to Livonia by the crusades and in the following centuries they functioned as centres of regional government, military bases and symbols of lordship. In the 1180s the first stone castles with churches were built in the area of the Livs on the lower reaches of the Dūna at Ūxküll (mod. Ikšķile, Latvia) and Holme (mod. Mārtiņšala, Latvia). The local population soon recognized the advantages of such fortifications and so the Livs of Holme promised to accept baptism only once a stone castle had been built at their settlement.⁴¹ Some one hundred castles were established in Latvia during the Middle Ages but only about thirty of those were built by the end of the thirteenth century; the fourteenth century was the most active period of castle building, with the construction of fifty-four castles.⁴² This peak in the fourteenth century might be related to the establishment of fiefs and the expansion of imported power structures into the countryside. For the crusaders the most important issue was control of the water routes, and so the areas of the Dūna and the Aa were the only regions where castles were built during the first half of the thirteenth century. Throughout the Middle Ages there were regions in Livonia (mainly in peripheral areas) outside administrative and military control where local centres of power existed during the first centuries of Livonia. The eastern borders of Livonia were fortified quite late; the castle in Ludsen (mod. Ludza, Latvia) is first mentioned in 1433 but that in Marienhausen (mod. Viļaka, Latvia) appears only in the early sixteenth century. Generally, power at the central level was replaced very quickly, while at the local level different forms and structures coexisted; there was no total break. Both power strategies – coexistence and confrontation – were used in organizing social networks during the restructuring of space.

Archaeological excavations have shown that local populations continued to live in settlements (including hillforts) located close to stone castles after the crusades. Thus the hillforts at Cesvaine, Asote and Tanīsakalns were inhabited during the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries. Sabile hillfort was used until the late thirteenth century, while the settlement around it (called *pylsaten* in a document from 1422) was inhabited until the seventeenth century; from the fourteenth century this place coexisted with a stone castle which had its own settlement.⁴³ Natives also lived in the castles or around them, as, for example, at Holme and Lokstene, coexisting with crusaders and immigrants throughout the medieval period, sometimes forming the basis for the medieval towns.

⁴¹ Henry of Livonia, ch. I.5–7, pp. 48–49.

⁴² Andris Caune and Ieva Ose, *Latvijas 12. gadsimta beigu – 17. gadsimta vācu piļu leksikons* (Rīga, 2004).

⁴³ Ēvalds Mugurēvičs, 'Burg und Burgsiedlung Sabile (Zabeln) im 11.–16. Jh.', *Lietuvos archeologija* 21 (2001), 63–71.

Like the castles, an absolutely new element in the landscape of Latvia was the town, although urban forms had previously existed there. The emergence of urbanism in the tenth to twelfth centuries in the eastern Baltic region followed the formation of the so-called 'early towns' in neighbouring areas, namely Scandinavia and the Slavic lands. The characteristic features of early towns were the structure of the site with regard to the number of inhabitants, systematic and intensive construction, socio-economic and non-agrarian functions (in the eastern Baltic region early towns lacked functions as political centres) and a clear demarcation from the surrounding area.⁴⁴

During the thirteenth century the idea of the medieval town based on a legal criterion, namely town privileges, was imported and established in Livonia, thus constituting a new alternative to the local economical centres. The town was closely connected with and protected by a castle which served as a centre of military and political power. Yet like other heavily forested medieval regions, Livonia was not rich in towns. Fifteen towns were established in Livonia by the end of the Middle Ages (eleven of them in the territory of present-day Latvia), and there was almost no continuity between them and the previous craft and trade centres of the pre-crusade period.

The main towns of Livonia were Riga, Reval (mod. Tallinn, Estonia), Dorpat (mod. Tartu, Estonia), Pernau (mod. Pärnu, Estonia) and Narva; the others were centres of local importance.⁴⁵ It was long-distance trade that provided wider economic opportunities for the towns, so many of the towns bound their economies and policies to those of the Hanseatic League. As elsewhere in medieval Europe, the Livonian towns were politically and legally connected with other, larger towns, sometimes their mother-town. So the oldest town in Livonia was Riga and the other towns in the territory of Latvia were very similar to it. While there are rich medieval sources for Riga's society and economy, there is relatively little for the smaller

⁴⁴ For the discussion about the early towns in Latvia see Arnis Radņš, 'Pirmo pilsētu veidošanās problēma Latvijā', in *Latvijas arheoloģija: Pētījumi un problēmas*, ed. Ingrida Virse (Rīga, 2002), pp. 143–52; Andris Šnē, 'Agrās pilsētas, rezidences, nocietinājumi. Dienvidaustrumlatvijas dzelzs laikmeta pilskalni sociālpolitiskā kontekstā', in *Arheoloģiskie pieminekļi, arheoloģiskās vietas*, ed. Andris Šnē and Juris Urtāns (Rīga, 2000), pp. 40–60; Šnē, 'Emergence and Development of Early Urbanism in the Late Prehistoric Latvia', in *Riga und der Ostseeraum: Von der Gründung 1201 bis in die Frühe Neuzeit*, ed. Ilgvars Misāns and Horst Wernicke (Marburg, 2005), pp. 24–36.

⁴⁵ For the development of medieval towns and their policy in the territory of Latvia, see Ilgvars Misāns, 'Der Städtetag als Instrument hansischer Politik der livländischen Städte', *Hansische Geschichtsblätter* 119 (2001), 85–102; Misāns, 'Riga, Dorpat und Reval im Spannungsfeld zwischen den wendischen und preußischen Städten vom Ende des 14. bis zur Mitte des 15. Jahrhunderts', in *Prusy i Inflanty między średniowieczem a nowożytnością: Państwo – społeczeństwo – kultura*, ed. Bogusław Dybas and Dariusz Makia (Toruń, 2003), pp. 29–43; Misāns, 'Wolmar: Eine hansische Kleinstadt im mittelalterlichen Livland', in *Aus der Geschichte Alt-Livlands*, ed. Bernhart Jähnig and Klaus Militzer (Münster, 2004), pp. 39–54.

towns; some of them, such as Kokenhusen and Ronneburg (mod. Rauna, Latvia), have left only indirect indications of town privileges. Riga emerged around the castle established there in 1201 close to two settlements of the native Livs, obtaining a town privilege similar to that of Visby in 1225. The basis of Riga's prosperity was trade, as its merchants acted as mediators within the Hanseatic network linking Western Europe and Novgorod. For decades it was the only real harbour on the eastern Baltic coast, functioning not only as a merchant town but the seat of a bishop and frontier settlement, and its inhabitants actively participated in the crusades, unlike the inhabitants of other towns.⁴⁶

In the medieval Baltic region, religion was closely associated with politics and sometimes it was a question of survival to choose religious affiliation on the basis of its practical benefits. The native peoples chose Christianity as a matter of politics rather than as the result of emotional or intellectual conversion. Thus in the middle of the thirteenth century the main Lithuanian chief, Mindaugas, acknowledged the power strategies and co-operated with the Teutonic Order, subordinating religion to his own political aims.⁴⁷ The pre-crusade contacts of the Lettgallians and Livs with the Russian principalities, and the taxes sometimes paid to them, were probably intended to secure defence against the Lithuanians; but later, after the conversion, these peoples joined the crusades against the Lithuanians, Curonians and other neighbours to gain revenge or redress for wrongs done to them. According to Henry's Chronicle, the Livs and Lettgallians were mobilized about forty times as participants in the crusades against other native peoples, while the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* also shows that natives were often involved in military activities against each other.⁴⁸ So the strategies of the natives were directed by practical considerations, while the crusaders also used religion for very secular aims.

Medieval Livonia witnesses an attempt at the ideological transformation of the religious landscape through the conversion of the native people. As the most important interest of ruling social groups is maintenance of their order in the whole area of their control, the newly established Christian Church tried to create a network of Christian churches in Livonia. The first churches there were constructed at the very beginning of the Christian mission in 1180s on the lower reaches of the River Dūna, and in the following centuries the construction of churches accompanied the enlargement of the regions under Christian control. In the territory of present-day Latvia, more than thirty churches were established in the lands of the Livonian Order, twenty-three churches in the territory of the archbishopric of Riga and nine in the bishopric of Curonia.⁴⁹ In the countryside the churches evidently became

⁴⁶ Indriķis Šterns, 'Rīgas loma Livonijas krustakaros', in *Senā Rīga*, ed. Andris Caune, Ieva Ose and Andris Celmiņš, 4 (Rīga, 2003), pp. 373–80.

⁴⁷ Zigmantas Kiaupa, Jūrate Kiaupiene and Albinas Kuncevičius, *The History of Lithuania before 1795* (Vilnius, 2000), pp. 51–68.

⁴⁸ Šterns, *Latvijas vēsture 1180–1290*, pp. 591–604.

⁴⁹ Šterns, *Latvijas vēsture 1290–1500*, pp. 21–152.

centres of everyday life and at the same time acted as points for the Church and social elite to gain control over the people.

Burial rites are one form of symbolic action which can be seen to legitimize the social order. Archaeological research shows that the majority of medieval burials are organized according to Christian traditions, while a third of the burials still reflect heathen beliefs and traditions or at least vestiges of these. Burials with heathen features are more commonly found in rural and village cemeteries. So in some cemeteries (for example, at Jaunpiebalga) it is possible to observe a transition from burial mounds of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries to the flat graves of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. In western Latvia the Curonians also used cremation during the fourteenth century (for example, at Roņi cemetery), while the Livs still buried their dead in barrows. The amount and quality of grave goods also sharply decreased from the thirteenth century onwards. They disappeared only during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries but even in this last phase everyday utensils and coins were still placed in the burials. A most unusual case is the cemetery at Lejaskrogs in Curonia, which was in use from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. Grave goods were placed in 124 (84 per cent) of the excavated burials; these were mainly jewellery, but weapons such as axes or spears are found in eight male burials.⁵⁰ The weapons, although not common, were placed in burials until the beginning of the sixteenth century when the Livonian Estates banned the natives from bearing weapons.

The written medieval sources also mention the practice of heathen rites. In the 1220s Henry remarked on the cremations of the dead among the heathen Curonians,⁵¹ while the French knight Guillebert de Lannoy, who travelled around western areas of Livonia in 1413–14, wrote that the Curonians richly furnished the dead and then cremated the corpses.⁵² Especially significant was the death of a Christianized chief of the Livs, Caupo, whose adventurous life came to an end in 1217 when he was mortally wounded in battle against the heathen Estonians. The funeral of Caupo took place in the presence of military and religious leaders of the crusaders but, surprisingly, his remains were cremated.⁵³ So Caupo died as a Christian, but his funeral was explicitly pagan in character. This can probably be explained by his status, and it might also be suggested that later cremations among the Livs were connected with the leaders of communities. The social rather than religious context of such cremations would be a reasonable argument for the Christian powers to accept heathen burial rites for a Christian. This phenomenon also reflects the very flexible borderline between Christianity and paganism that originated in the age

⁵⁰ Vītolds Muižnieks, 'Arheoloģiskie pētījumi Puzes Lejaskroga kapsētā un viduslaiku apbedīšanas tradīcijas Ziemeļkurzemē', *Ventspils Muzeja Raksti* 3 (2003), 94–112 (here 102–106).

⁵¹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIV.5, pp. 138–39.

⁵² Arnolds Spekke, *Latvieši un Livonija 16. gs.* (Rīga, 1995), pp. 94–97.

⁵³ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXI.4, pp. 224–25.

of the crusades and lasted for several centuries in a dualistic social and cultural organization of Livonia.

The natives of Livonia managed to preserve some of their pagan cultic practices despite the Church's attempts to exterminate them. Thus in 1589 Salomon Henning wrote that the inhabitants of Curonia worshipped the sun, the moon, the stars, while also having sacred waters, woods and trees; similar comments had been made in 1544 by Sebastian Münster.⁵⁴ The ancient and widespread tradition of offering sacrifices was even practised in the medieval towns; horses' skulls and even the whole skeleton of a horse have been found under the basements of several buildings from the twelfth to the thirteenth centuries, as well as under some towers in the city wall of Riga and some houses in Dünaburg (in mod. Daugavpils district, Latvia).⁵⁵ As has been noted in recent research, attitudes towards the local people was at least partly determined by the tradition inherited from the crusaders, which maintained that local people still largely remained pagans, were ignorant in religion and preserved different traditions.⁵⁶

Conclusions

The crusades of the thirteenth century brought about the establishment of a Livonian political order consisting of several small states (those of the Teutonic Order, the archbishopric of Riga and four bishoprics) characterized by Christianity, towns, literacy, a system of fiefs and other imported Western values. On the other side of this emerging medieval world were the local communities that had undergone serious changes under the influence of the conflicts and coexistence with the crusaders but which had managed to maintain their pagan and rural character. Of course, many adaptations to the new circumstances were made by the local chiefs and communities. So in general Livonia combined imported medieval (Christian feudal) and local prehistoric (pagan chieftaincy) social structures and found a way of coexisting for the coming centuries. The egalitarian local societies easily adapted themselves to the changing circumstances and did not make serious threats to the newly arrived crusaders whose lordship over the lands was recognized. The native people retained their local worldviews from the late pagan (prehistoric) periods throughout the Middle Ages and the best example of that is probably the persistence of pagan tradition. The worship of different natural forces and deities is recorded until the nineteenth century, so there was some syncretism of religions in which elements of both paganism and Christianity were combined. Therefore we may say that during the medieval period there were two cultures as well as two societies in Livonia which existed quite separately.

⁵⁴ Spekke, *Latvieši un Livonija*, p. 229.

⁵⁵ Guntis Zemītis, *Ornaments un simbols Latvijas aizvēsturē* (Rīga, 2004), pp. 98–99.

⁵⁶ Kala, 'The Incorporation of the Northern Baltic Lands', pp. 19–20.

Chapter 4

Sweden's Conquest of Finland: A Clash of Cultures?

Philip Line

During the thirteenth century a region approximating to the southern part of modern Finland was incorporated into the kingdom of Sweden. The limited extant written sources suggest that both independence and religious beliefs were suppressed through the use of military force, an experience which would have been traumatic for the inhabitants. This chapter will discuss the nature of religious conversion in Finland as well as the way in which socio-political structures and relations between different settlement regions may have been transformed by Swedish intervention.

The sources that refer to conquests and enforced conversion to Christianity in Finland and Karelia are both meagre and suspect. Our only evidence for the so-called 'first crusade' of King Erik Jedvardsson (reigned c. 1156–60), which supposedly Christianized Finland, comes from his legend, of which the earliest extant version dates from around 1340.¹ Even if this particular version of the legend originated in the late thirteenth century, as some scholars contend, it belongs to a period of warrior-saints who demonstrated their Christian virtue by launching military campaigns to spread the faith. In the same era, when Sweden was consolidating its hold on western Finland, it would have served as a justification for this. A parallel legend, which almost certainly originated in Finland, claims that a certain Bishop Henrik travelled with Erik and was subsequently martyred.² Henrik later became Finland's national saint, just as Erik became that of Sweden.

The sole evidence for an expedition that supposedly Christianized the region of Tavastia (mod. Häme, Finland), nowadays often called the 'second crusade', comes from the *Erik Chronicle* (Sw. *Erikskrönikan*), a rhymed chronicle of the early fourteenth century which was heavily influenced by chivalric romance.³ The chronicle gives no dates, but indicates that the expedition was led by Birger Magnusson, *jarl* and *de facto* ruler of Sweden for much of the reign of his son Valdemar (1250–75). It may have occurred at any time between 1237, when Pope Gregory IX requested Swedish prelates to preach a crusade against Finnish pagans, and 1250, the dates favoured by scholars being either 1238–39 or 1249.

¹ 'Vita Sanct Eric Regis – Erik den Heliges legend på latin, forn-svenska och modern svenska', ed. and trans. Toni Schmid, in *Erik den helige, Historia, Kult, Reliker*, ed. Bengt Thordemann (Stockholm, 1954), pp. xi–xx.

² Tuomas Heikkilä, *Pyhän Henrikin Legenda* (Helsinki, 2006), pp. 739–80.

³ *Erikskrönikan*, ed. Sven-Bertil Jansson (Stockholm, 1993), pp. 30–32.

Peoples and Regions

A number of Finnish regional names occur in late medieval Swedish sources, including the Finnish-language *Suomi*, *Kalanti*, *Kainuu* and *Savo*, but the regions they represented cannot be shown to correspond with pre-conquest social or political entities.⁴ *Kainuu* was variously used as an alternative name for *Satakunta* or *Pohjanmaa* (Ostrobothnia), or might include both as well as adjoining inland areas. In Scandinavian sources from the Viking or crusade periods the terms *Finnar* or *Finni* were normally applied to inhabitants of northern Finland (Lapps or Saami), whereas Swedish sources referred to people in the south-west as *Finlander* and those who lived further inland as *Tavester*.⁵ The corresponding Finnish names are *Suomi* and *Häme*.⁶ The origin of the name *Suomi* is uncertain, but *Häme* is cognate with *Saami*, in origin a Baltic loanword meaning '[people of] the interior (inland)'. Norwegian sources also mention *Kvenland* and *Kvenir* (lowlanders?), inhabitants of an unspecified region on the route from Hälsingland to 'Finland'.⁷ The *Sum* of Russian sources appear to be identical with *Suomi*, and *Jem* may usually be identified as *Hämäläiset*, although some early references may refer to indigenous groups further east.⁸ *Korela* first appears in Russian sources in 1143, probably originally the name of a settlement on the site of Keksholm, known in Finnish as *Käkisalmi* (mod. Priozërsk, Russia).⁹ Three regions of relatively dense settlement are clearly distinguishable in the twelfth century: south-western Finland and southern *Satakunta* (around the Kokemäki River as far as Pyhäjärvi), the region around lakes Vanaja, Näsijärvi and Päijänne, and the northern and western shores of Lake Ladoga. These corresponded to (Varsinais-)Suomi, Häme

⁴ Unto Salo, 'Oliko Kalanti muinaismaakunta?', in *Muinainen Kalanti ja sen Naapurit: Talonpojan maailma rautakaudelta keskiajalle*, ed. Veijo Kaitanen, Esa Laukkanen and Kari Uotila (Helsinki, 2003), pp. 13–91; Matti Huurre, 'Esihistoria', in Matti Huurre and Jorma Keränen, *Kainuun Historia 1* (Kajaani, 1986), pp. 10–200 (here 151–54).

⁵ Jarl Gallén, 'Länsi-Eurooppalaiset ja skandinaaviset Suomen esihistoriaa koskevat lähteet', in *Suomen väestön esihistorialliset juuret*, ed. Jarl Gallén et al. (Helsinki, 1984), pp. 249–64 (here 252–54). I have used the following periodization of Finnish Iron Age prehistory and archaeology: Migration 400–550, Merovingian 550–800 (Sweden's 'Vendel Period'), Viking 800–1050, Crusade 1050–1250. The crusade period of Karelia is generally dated a little later, 1100–1300.

⁶ Kaisa Häkkinen, *Suomalaisten esihistoria kielitieteen valossa* (Helsinki, 1996), pp. 156–57. The modern Finnish name for the people of Häme is *Hämäläiset*.

⁷ *Egils saga Skallagrimssonar*, ed. Sigurðar Nordal (Reykjavík, 1933), ch. XXIV, pp. 35–37. See Kustaa Vilkkuna, *Kainuu – Kvenland missä ja mikä?* (Helsinki, 1957).

⁸ Heikki Kirkinen, 'Suomi ja sen asukkaat venäläisissä lähteissä vuoteen 1323', in *Suomen väestön esihistorialliset juuret*, pp. 265–82 (here 267).

⁹ On the origin of the name, see Janne Saarikivi, 'Karjala – "karjamaa" vai "karikko"?' in *Viipurin Läänin Historia 1: Karjalan Synty*, ed. Matti Saarnisto (Jyväskylä, 2003), p. 491.

and Karelia, the first two being called Finland ('Egentliga', or 'real' Finland) and Tavastia by the Swedes.

The names attributed to these regions and their inhabitants in non-Finnish medieval sources have led many to assume that they were occupied by distinct 'tribes' or peoples, perhaps comparable to the *Svear* of Svealand and east and west *Götar* of Östergötland and Västergötland, who are also mentioned in foreign sources long before they appeared in the historical records of Sweden itself.¹⁰ However, whereas the different *land* of the *Svear* and *Götar* had their own assemblies and laws by the time Sweden developed its own written culture in the thirteenth century, suggesting that the distinctions made by earlier external sources were valid, there is no record of regional institutions in Finland.

With the sole exception of a reference to kings of the *Kvenir* in *Egils Saga*, foreign sources do not refer to 'kings' or 'princes' among the Finns, whereas they do record them among the Slavs and Balts of the eastern and southern Baltic coasts. The Novgorod chronicles suggest that considerable numbers of *Jem* (in these cases clearly *Hämäläiset*) could be raised for raids on Karelia and Ingria and that Karelians raided Häme in similar fashion, but this does not necessarily demonstrate permanent political authority, as many tribal or even more politically fragmented societies have been able to organize combined forces under temporary leadership.¹¹ The late medieval Finnish custom of appointing leaders for specific tasks such as hunting, fishing or raiding (or even rebelling) appears to have been a survival of this practice, such leaders often being nominated as 'kings' (Finn. *kuninkaat*). A fourteenth-century *cuningas de Rapalum* ('king of Rapola'), one of the ringleaders of a group of Häme peasants refusing to pay the tithe, is one example. The Swedish authorities in Finland attempted to suppress the peasant custom of electing leaders, but apparently still expected the Finns to organize themselves for defence in the war with Muscovy in 1495–96.¹² There is also no reason to assume that the raiding *Jem* or 'Karelians' were mobilized from all the villages of these regions.

¹⁰ For a recent example, see Maunu Jokipii, *Karjalan Ristiretki ja Taistelu Nevan Reitistä: Der Kreuzzug nach Karelien und der Kampf um den Wasserweg auf der Nawa* (Kuopio, 2003), p. 41.

¹¹ There are four Novgorod chronicles: the *First Novgorod Chronicle*, the *Younger Version* of this chronicle, the *Novgorod Karamzin Chronicle*, and the *Fourth Novgorod Chronicle*. Unless otherwise stated, references are to the first.

¹² For example, see *Finlands Medeltidsurkunder: Samlade och i tryck utgifna af Finlands Statsarkiv*, ed. Reinhold Hausen, 8 vols (Helsinki, 1910–35), 5, no. 4627, pp. 496–98, 6, no. 4651, pp. 5–8.

Archaeological Evidence for Social and Political Organization

The origin of the crusade-period settlement pattern appears to lie in an expansion of farming communities from south-western Finland into Häme via the Eura district in Satakunta, which had occurred during the period 600–1000.¹³ In this sense the Iron Age society of Häme was no more than an extension of that in Varsinais-Suomi.¹⁴ Because of the lack of remains from settlements themselves, evidence for their location in the Iron Age has been imputed from known cemeteries. An apparent drop in their number within Häme during the Viking and early crusade periods probably indicates that settlement was becoming more concentrated rather than diminishing, reflecting a movement from extended kin group settlements to villages. By the late Viking period settlement had expanded to the east of Lake Päijänne, spreading to the shores of Lake Ladoga. Recent work suggests that immigrants merged with a sparse local population there.¹⁵ However, for unknown reasons settlement largely ceased in southern Pohjanmaa and eastern and central Uusimaa by the 900s.

In recent years Scandinavian archaeologists have sought to identify ‘central places’ in the prehistoric cultural landscape, sites which might have had cultic, military, political and judicial functions for a wider community around them. In Finland and Karelia, conspicuous monuments such as large mounds, buildings of exceptionally large size or assemblages of these and considered as possible central places, are absent. Admittedly there has not been any systematic attempt to identify other possible indicators of power, but there is currently no sign of the transformation from tribe or chieftaincy to proto-state that occurred in Scandinavia. Social stratification undoubtedly existed, as indicated by grave finds. The disparity in wealth between the lower and upper strata appears to have diminished somewhat after the Merovingian period, perhaps alongside the growth of village communities, although villages generally remained small, usually consisting of a few households.¹⁶

A few sites have been excavated that may have been seasonal trading centres, but there is no obvious sign that they were also chieftains’ residences. In Häme a defended site has been excavated at Varikkoniemi, with finds that date to between

¹³ Matti Huurre, *9000 vuotta Suomen esihistoriaa* (Helsinki, 1995), pp. 124–36.

¹⁴ Karl Fredrik Meinander, ‘The Finnish Society in the Eight to Twelfth Centuries’, *Helsingin yliopiston Arkeologian laitos Moniste* 22 (1978), 7–22 (here 10).

¹⁵ Aleksandr Saksa, *Rautakautinen Karjala Muinais-Karjalan asutuksen synty ja varhaiskehitys* (Joensuu, 1998), pp. 194–96.

¹⁶ Huurre, *9000 vuotta Suomen esihistoriaa*, pp. 173–96, 215–19; Hans-Peter Schulz, ‘Vanajan alueen myöhäisrautakautinen ja varhaiskeskiaikainen asutus uusien arkeologisten löytöjen valossa’, in *Suomen varhais historia: Tornion kongressi, 14–16.6.91*, ed. Kyösti Julku (Rovaniemi, 1992), pp. 517–29 (here 523).

the ninth and thirteenth centuries.¹⁷ It is situated at the centre of the Vanaja (western) settlement area of Häme, and at the eastern end of the medieval *härkätie* ('ox-road'), which began near Åbo (mod. Turku, Finland). The settlement had a ditch and possibly a palisade, and its size was greater than the norm in crusade-period Finland. Both the settlement site and the nearby cemetery revealed a greater variety of artefacts than other cemeteries. On this basis, Hans-Peter Schulz believes that it was a regional centre, at least for the Vanaja district, but it is difficult to know whether it was a political as well as a cultural centre.¹⁸ In the Karelian Isthmus there were also two trading centres, Taipaleensaari and Tiurin Linnasaari, but neither of these sites was centrally situated in a settlement district.¹⁹

In the crusade period there were numerous forts scattered across the settlement areas, although many features now named *muinaislinna* ('ancient fort') or similar may never have been forts in the Iron Age or Middle Ages. Of the sixty-four possible fort sites identified by Luoto in Kalanti (in north-western Varsinais-Suomi) and neighbouring municipalities, twenty-one can be identified only by name or popular tradition.²⁰ Taavitsainen has assessed the number of definite hillforts within the present-day borders of Finland at seventy.²¹ These vary considerably in size, from 600 to 9000 m², with the exception of Rapola in Sääksmäki, which has an area of over five hectares. Its sheer size led some to see it as a possible centre in Häme, but no cultural layer has been found there or in any other hillfort.

It is difficult to argue that fortified hilltop sites were not, at least to some degree, a response to violence. In Finland remains of buildings and finds of household equipment within the forts have been rare. Militarily they could have functioned as homes for garrisons, mustering places for offensive action, watch posts or refuges from attackers. Walls were built from local materials, and inaccessible approaches were often left undefended, as at Kapatuosia (Hollola).²² Numbers for military forces given in medieval sources are notoriously unreliable, but those recorded in the Novgorod chronicles are not large, ranging from 400 to an exceptionally high

¹⁷ Eeva-Liisa Schulz, 'Hämeenlinnan Varikkoniemen kauppapaikan kaivaukset 1986–1990', in *Suomen varhaishistoria*, pp. 507–16.

¹⁸ Schulz, 'Vanajan alueen myöhäisrautakautinen ja varhaiskeskiaikainen asutus', pp. 525–26.

¹⁹ Aleksandr Saksa, Pirjo Uino and Markus Hiekkanen, 'Ristiretkiaika', in *Viipurin Läänin Historia*, 1: *Karjalan Synty*, ed. Matti Saarnisto (Jyväskylä, 2003), pp. 406–12.

²⁰ Jukka Luoto, 'Muinaislinnat, milloin ja mihin tarkoitukseen?', in *Muinainen Kalanti ja sen Naapurit: Talonpojan maailma rautakaudelta keskiajalle*, ed. Veijo Kaitanen et al. (Helsinki, 2003), pp. 182–84. Kalanti (Sw. Kaland) was first mentioned in written sources in 1332, but the name may have been used earlier for a region larger than the parish.

²¹ Jussi-Pekka Taavitsainen, *Ancient Hillforts: Problems of Analysis, Chronology and Interpretation with Special Reference to the Hillfort of Kuhmoinen* (Helsinki, 1994), p. 13.

²² Finnish place-names are followed in parenthesis by the name of the parish in which they are situated.

2000. The size of early and high medieval armies in Europe was in any case small, usually numbering hundreds or low thousands, and many raiding forces would have been smaller still. If the forts of Finland and Karelia were designed partly to counter raids from other Finns or Karelians, the numbers needed to hold them would also have been small.

The nature of the finds at most of the forts has made assessment of their period of use difficult. Artefacts such as coarse-ware pottery, spiral bracelets and pennanular brooches may have been in use for a considerable period. Taavitsainen concluded from the latest dates of cremated objects and datings of intact objects that most of the forts were in use during the late Viking and crusade periods, the same period in which we know from the *First Chronicle of Novgorod* that there was military activity.²³ This records mid-twelfth-century raids by *Jem* and Karelians on each other and a joint Karelian-Novgorodian raid on Häme in 1226, but natives may have been threatened by *varjager* (the Scandinavians of Russian sources) and Rus' before this, demanding tribute or simply plundering. The majority of Karelian forts are north-west of Lake Ladoga, which suggests that they may have been built by northern Karelians as a counter to Rus' and later Novgorodian 'tribute-gathering', rather than attacks from Häme. At only three forts is there a clear continuity from the Merovingian to the end of the crusade period, although there is more from Viking to crusade periods.²⁴

There is no close correspondence between individual forts and settlements, nor any evidence that defensive systems of hillforts were planned. Schulz has argued that the forts of the Vanaja region made up some sort of defensive ring around the settlements there, but their manpower would not have sufficed to garrison the forts permanently, although they may have functioned as watch posts and temporary refuges.²⁵ Topographical factors appear to have been uppermost in the siting of hillforts, most having been constructed on rocky outcrops, some on islands or ridges. Where such features were lacking, as in the settled area around Sysmä, there were no forts. A few forts are too far from signs of settlement to be refuges, and are more likely to have been used as watch posts and assembly points for offensive action.

In view of the above, past attempts to reconstruct prehistoric socio-political units that corresponded to hillforts appear to lack foundation. The coincidence between hillforts and parishes is insufficient to support Meinander's hypothesis that the medieval Finnish parish (Finn. *pitäjä*) might have derived from prehistoric Finnish tribal districts. The ethnographer Vilkuna also argued that the *pitäjä* may have had a similar origin to that of Savo-Karelia, as a *kihlakunta*. By the Treaty of

²³ Taavitsainen, *Ancient Hillforts*, p. 133. See also Pirjo Uino, *Ancient Karelia: Archaeological Studies* (Helsinki, 1997), pp. 77–90, who is not entirely convinced by Taavitsainen's assumptions about the re-use of objects.

²⁴ Taavitsainen, *Ancient Hillforts*, pp. 127–33.

²⁵ Schulz, 'Vanajan alueen myöhäisrautakautinen ja varhaiskeskiaikainen asutus', p. 522.

Nöteborg (Russ. Orekhovets, Finn. Pähkinäsaari) in 1323 Sweden acquired three former Novgorodian districts, which it named *gislalagh* (Finn. *kihlakunta*). The word implies a district for hostage-giving or tribute-gathering, and was used as a translation of the Russian word *pogosta* (parish). Salo suggested that the origin of the *kihlakunta*, which existed in Karelia, Häme and Estonia (Est. *kihelkond*) was to be found in a district division for tribute payment to Rus'-Novgorod, each giving hostages as surety for payment, a common practice in early medieval Europe. According to this theory, each *kihlakunta* of Karelia became a Russian *pogosta*, which was therefore translated as *gislalagh* in the Treaty of Nöteborg. By the mid-fourteenth century each former *pogosta* was a parish of the Latin Church.²⁶

Vilkuna based his hypothesis about pre-parish organization in Finland on Estonian evidence, but conditions in late Iron Age Estonia differed from those in Finland.²⁷ The population of Finland was certainly much lower than the estimate of 120,000–180,000 for thirteenth-century Estonia, made on the basis of Danish tax records.²⁸ Moreover, some of the Estonian forts (Est. *maalinnad*) were occupied permanently, possibly by an elite that dominated a region approximating to a *kihelkond*, which later came to mean parish.²⁹ Before 1323, evidence for districts similar to the *kihlakunta* or *pogosta* in Finland or Karelia does not exist. Salo's theory implies payment of tribute by the people of Estonia, Karelia and Finland during the twelfth century at the latest, but there is no good written or archaeological evidence for Russian military activity during this early period except in Estonia. Its denser settlement and less peripheral location made Estonia the greater prize to expansive military orders and kingdoms.

In 1933 Tallgren suggested that sites including the place-name component *moisio*, often linked with manors in the later Middle Ages, might have originated as chieftains' residences, and that *hiisi* sites indicated pagan sacred places.³⁰ There are indications of continuity in use of *moisio*-sites, as we shall see below, but oral tradition provides the uncertain 'evidence' for prehistoric use of *hiisi*-sites. There is little clue as to how chieftaincy functioned in Iron Age Finland. It is possible that the authority of local chieftains encompassed both cultic and judicial functions, as suggested in recent work on Norway and Sweden.³¹

Hoards of valuable objects have been found throughout the settled regions of Finland, except in Kalanti, but only rarely are they clearly associated with

²⁶ *Registrum Ecclesiae Åboensis: Åbo Domkyrkas Svartbok med tillägg ur Skoklosters Codex Aboensis*, ed. Reinhold Hausen (Helsinki, 1890), nos 52, 83, 98, pp. 33, 52, 59–60.

²⁷ Kustaa Vilkuna, *Kihlakunta ja häävuode: Tutkielma suomalaisen yhteiskunnan järjestymisen vaiheilta* (Helsinki, 1964).

²⁸ Jüri Selirand, *Viron Rautakausi* (Jyväskylä, 1983), p. 147.

²⁹ Aivar Kriiska and Andres Tvauri, *Eesti Muinasaeg* (Tallinn, 2002), pp. 208–10.

³⁰ Aarne Michael Tallgren, 'Hiisi ja Moisio', *Virittäjä* 37 (1933), 319–31.

³¹ For instance, Olof Sundqvist, *Freyr's Offspring: Rulers and Religion in Ancient Svea Society* (Uppsala, 2002), pp. 122–24, on halls as cultic centres, and Thomas Andrew Dubois, *Nordic Religions in the Viking Age* (Philadelphia, 1999), pp. 65–68, on the *goði*.

hillforts or cemeteries. Hoarding may have been a response to enemy threat, but it has also been interpreted as storage. Items manufactured locally and in everyday use may provide a better indication of shared identity, but only brooches have survived in sufficient numbers. Brooches were clearly used by women as part of everyday dress and some variants were used by both sexes. Although no one would now argue that one artefact type is sufficient to identify socio-political units, similarity of material culture reflects social interaction, possibly marriage or kinship ties. The most important division in styles is between the west Finnish small pennanular brooches and east Finnish-Karelian oval tortoise brooches. Taavitsainen has shown that Päijät-Häme was a meeting point for Western and Eastern styles in this period.³² In Savo a cemetery at Kappelinmäki (Kauskila) has also revealed several finds of Karelian style. Unlike the nearby Visulahti (Mikkeli) cemetery, Kappelinmäki has revealed no finds from the Viking period, most being from around 1300, and the associated settlement probably originated in Karelia or the Isthmus. In both Päijät-Häme and Karelia a small number of graves have been excavated with goods dated to the later Middle Ages.³³ It appears that some people moved from Karelia into Savo and eastern Häme in the crusade period. They may have been encouraged to do so by Novgorod, but it is equally likely that they were fleeing its taxation. Studies of both dialect and place-name evidence have also suggested an eastern admixture in Päijät-Häme, but when and how this occurred is very difficult to establish.³⁴ In Karelia itself burial customs and grave goods sometimes resemble those of Häme, but others had links with neighbouring areas to the south and east. None could be said to be specifically 'Karelian' in origin.

Without written sources from within Finland itself we have no idea whether the people of the distinct settlement regions perceived themselves as belonging to a specific ethnic or tribal group. Although material remains can be dated with some degree of accuracy and classified into regional groupings or archaeological 'cultures', this tells us nothing about ethnicity or language, despite the temptation to equate them. In the case of Finland, only brooches have been found in sufficient numbers to make a tentative judgement on regional style, and stylistic groupings do not correspond to the settlement regions of Varsinais-Suomi, Häme and Karelia. None of these has a culture that is clearly distinct from that of neighbouring regions. Nor is there any clear evidence of regional socio-political centres or enterprises such as the construction of defensive systems that would have required regional organization of labour. In short, there is no good indication that any form of polity existed above the village chieftaincy.

³² Jussi-Pekka Taavitsainen, 'Häme ja Satakunta pakanuuden ajan lopulla', in *Ristin ja Olavin kansaa: Keskiajan usko ja kirkko Hämeessä ja Satakunnassa*, ed. Marja-Liisa Linder, Marjo-Riitta Saloniemi and Christian Krötzel (Tampere, 2000), pp. 19–29.

³³ Saksa, *Rautakautinen Karjala*, p. 138; Taavitsainen, *Ancient Hillforts*, pp. 84–85.

³⁴ Terho Itkonen, *Historiantakaiset Häme ja Suomi kielentutkijan näkökulmasta* (Helsinki, 1972), pp. 85–112 (here especially 93–111).

Early Swedish Interest in Finland

There may have been an element of force in the conversion of Finland, but Varsinais-Suomi and Karelia were both part of a Baltic trade network that had existed before the Viking period. There is a wealth of evidence for close links between western and south-western coastal regions of Finland and Sweden and the Gulf of Finland was one route by which goods travelled between Russia and Scandinavia. This route became more regulated as Novgorod's power over the Russian outlets increased, and grew in importance as the land and river routes through Livonia were obstructed by the conquests of the Sword Brethren around the turn of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Evidence for a Swedish presence in eleventh- and twelfth-century Finland is weak. In the 'Florence Document' dating from around 1120, *Findia* and *Hestia* (i.e. Finland and Estonia) are listed alongside several other missionary dioceses in Sweden itself.³⁵ Pope Alexander III's *Gravus admodum* letter of 1171, urging the Swedes to establish a permanent presence in Varsinais-Suomi, mentions that expeditions had been made and that the Finns had accepted the Christian faith under threat of force, but abandoned it as soon as the threat had gone.³⁶ The letter gives no clue as to who had converted the natives to Christianity in the first place. Denmark also had an interest in the Gulf of Finland,³⁷ and it is even possible that Alexander was referring to apostasy after Russian missions, as relations between the Orthodox and the Latin churches had not yet reached the low point that they would a century later.³⁸

In 1216 Innocent III sent a letter to King Erik Knutsson (1208–16) that referred to Finland as 'the land which through his predecessors was snatched from the pagans'.³⁹ The 'predecessors' could have been Erik's direct ancestors, Erik Jedvardsson and Knut Eriksson (c.1167–96), but might also have been kings from

³⁵ *Acta Pontificum Svecica: Acta Cameralia*, ed. Ludvig Magnus Bååth, 2 vols (Stockholm, 1936–57), 1: 3. The manuscript was discovered by Sven Tunberg in 1913. See Jarl Gallén, 'Kring det s.k. Florensdokumentet från omkring år 1120', *Historisk Tidskrift för Finland* 43 (1958), 1–26 (here 19), Tore Nyberg, 'Adam av Bremen och Florenslistan', *Scandia* 57 (1991), 153–89 (here 160–61, 178).

³⁶ *Finlands Medeltidsurkunder*, no. 24, pp. 12–13; *Diplomatarium Suecanum*, ed. Johan Gustav Liljegren et al., 10 vols (Stockholm, 1829–1970), 1, no. 59, pp. 87–88.

³⁷ Of the recorded Danish attacks on Finland, that in 1191 seems most certain: *Danmarks Middelalderlige Annaler*, ed. Erik Kromon (Copenhagen, 1980), *Annales Sorani 1130–1300*, p. 88, and in the same volume, *Annales Ryenses*, p. 166.

³⁸ See, for instance, John H. Lind, 'De russiske ægteskaber: Dynasti- og alliancepolitik i 1130'ernes danske borgerkrig', *Historisk Tidskrift (København)* 92 (1992), 225–63.

³⁹ *Finlands Medeltidsurkunder*, 1, no. 52, pp. 21–22; *Sveriges Traktater med Främmande Magter*, ed. Olof Simon Rydberg and Carl Hallendorff, 8 vols (Stockholm, 1877–1922), 1, no. 64, pp. 131–32: *Ipsiumque regnum ac terram, que clare memoriae predecessorum pagarorum minibus extrorsaverunt*.

the rival Sverker dynasty. Although there are no extant records of any expedition by Knut, he did receive a papal letter in 1193, thanking him for having fought to expand the Church's influence eastwards, but this was in the context of his promise to mount an expedition in an effort to secure papal support for the annulment of his queen's vow of chastity.⁴⁰ It is also quite possible that the formula in Innocent's letter derives from Erik himself, if the papal letter was a response, in which case it represents a Swedish claim to the territory.⁴¹

Nevertheless, an expedition may have been made by Erik Jedvardsson, providing the basis for the legendary 'crusade'. There has been a tendency to accept that an expedition of exceptional size must have taken place in his reign, simply because so many sources tell of it, but all of them are much later than the supposed crusade.⁴² Salo has also argued that Nousiainen and Mynämäki were removed from (Varsinais-) Suomi for a period, probably as a result of this crusade, and linked to the original mission diocese, 'Muinais-Kalanti', as part of Sweden's sphere of influence. According to this theory, the later inclusion of Suomi in the diocese was one of the reasons why its centre later moved from Nousiainen to Koroinen (or Åbo).⁴³ Salo's boundary changes, if they occurred, are impossible to date accurately, even assuming that the mission diocese of the twelfth century was a reality. Changes in burial practice cannot be dated precisely enough to associate them with the reign of Erik Jedvardsson, and it is questionable whether the sites mentioned in folk poems about Bishop Henrik, who supposedly accompanied Erik, were related to mission activities in the 1150s or simply to the area where his legend developed. There is not space here to explore the questions of whether Henrik was a bishop or not, where he came from and even whether he existed, but recent scholars favour the late thirteenth century as the era in which his legend and miracle collection took form.⁴⁴ The origins of the kalevala-metre *Surmavirsi* ('murder poem') are still more obscure, as the earliest extant written version dates from the seventeenth century.⁴⁵

The early history of the see of Finland is unclear. Fifteenth-century lists of bishops that go back to Henrik are extremely suspect. It seems possible that a bishop for Finland was created shortly after a bull authorizing this was issued

⁴⁰ *Diplomatarium Suecanum*, 1, no. 825, pp. 682–83.

⁴¹ Christian Krötzel, 'The Arrival of Religious Orders to the Northern Baltic Sea Region in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries', in *Dominikaanit Suomessa ja Itämeren Alueella Keskiäajalla. Dominikaanit Daciassa ja Suomessa Keskiäajalla Symposium Turussa 18–20.8.1999*, ed. Marjo Kaartinen et al. (Turku, 2003), pp. 17, 21.

⁴² See, for example, Heikkilä, *Pyhän Henrikin Legenda*, p. 56.

⁴³ Salo, 'Oliko Kalanti muinaismaakunta?', pp. 84–91.

⁴⁴ Heikkilä, *Pyhän Henrikin Legenda*, pp. 79–80.

⁴⁵ See, for example, Martti Haavio, *Piispa Henrik ja Lalli. Piispa Henrikin surmavirren historiaa* (Porvoo, 1948), p. 222, and Jarl Gallén, 'Till historien om St Henriks relikter och hans grav i Nousis', *Finsk Museum* (1972), pp. 33–38.

to Andreas Sunesen, archbishop of Lund, in 1209.⁴⁶ However, it is probable that Innocent III's letter of 1216, in which Erik Knutsson was asked to install one or two bishops under the authority of Uppsala, marks the final establishment of Finland's bishopric.⁴⁷ Its bishop is mentioned for the first time in 1221.⁴⁸ The first bishop's seat was Nousiainen, but it was moved between 1229 and 1232, either to Koroinen or directly to Åbo, where it was later to remain.⁴⁹ It is not clear that the early see was on a par with Sweden's other bishoprics until the late thirteenth century, since it is not referred to by the name of its episcopal seat until then, when it became the see of Åbo. Mid-thirteenth century papal letters that concern Finland were sent to the bishop of Linköping and Gotland's leading churchmen, and a letter of 1241 written by Archbishop Jarler of Uppsala lists all the bishops of his province, but does not include a bishop of Finland.⁵⁰ It is quite possible that Linköping had authority over Finland's bishop in this period. It is also possible that Ericus Olai's reference to Bishop Kol of Linköping as *dux Finlandie* can be seen in this context, even if the title *dux* is inappropriate, as it was normally applied to secular magnates.⁵¹

Whether the Swedes established a secular as well as an ecclesiastical presence in Varsinais-Suomi during the early thirteenth century is a moot point, but it is possible that the hillfort of Lieto was occupied by them at this time. Little is known of the first bishop, but Varsinais-Suomi and Satakunta were to all intents and purposes already Christianized when the see was established. The first known bishop, Thomas, has assumed a stature in some Finnish historiography out of all proportion to that warranted by the sources. The earliest written records of him mention the transfer of two estates to his chaplain, Vilhelm, in 1234.⁵² He is not heard of again until 1245, when he was forced to resign because he had forged a papal bull and caused someone to be mutilated and killed. There is more about Thomas in the Finnish *Catalogus episcoporum*, but its information on Thomas's resignation contradicts that of the earlier papal letters. Unfortunately, two modern Finnish historians have elaborated on Thomas's life and in doing so painted a

⁴⁶ *Diplomatarium Suecanum*, 1, no. 59, pp. 87–88.

⁴⁷ *Finlands Medeltidsurkunder*, 1, no. 52, pp. 21–22.

⁴⁸ *Diplomatarium Suecanum*, 1, no. 206, pp. 220–21 (*Finlands Medeltidsurkunder*, 1, no. 64, p. 24).

⁴⁹ Jarl Gallén, 'När blev Åbo biskopssäte?', *Historisk Tidskrift för Finland* 63 (1978), 312–25 (here 320).

⁵⁰ *Diplomatarium Suecanum*, 1, no. 305, pp. 295–96.

⁵¹ Ericus Olai, *Chronica Regni Gothorum*, ed. Ella Heuman and Jan Öberg, 2 vols (Stockholm, 1993–95), 1: 72. Birger Jarl's son Bengt obtained this title in the reign of Magnus Ladulås (1275–90): Per Olof Sjöstrand, 'Den svenska tidigmedeltida statsbildningprogram och den östra riksdelen', *Historisk Tidskrift för Finland* 79 (1994), 530–73 (here 564–65).

⁵² *Diplomatarium Suecanum*, 1, nos 290, 291, pp. 284–85.

highly imaginative picture of the see of Åbo in its early years, in which Thomas steers an independent course for Finland.⁵³

In 1229 a series of letters concerning the Finnish bishopric was sent by Pope Gregory IX. The seat of the bishop was to be moved, but the pope also took the clergy and people of Finland under his protection and instructed local clergy and secular rulers to prevent merchants from trading with the Novgorodians on account of their attacks on the Finnish Catholic community.⁵⁴ It is possible that the Finnish bishopric was in crisis in the late 1220s, but there is no clear indication of this. Although there is no evidence that the diocese of Åbo was not under the authority of Uppsala in the early 1230s, an attempt was made to co-ordinate mission efforts in the eastern Baltic by the papal vice-legat Baldwin of Aulne, which may, depending on the historian's viewpoint, have amounted to an attempt at direct papal government. In 1232 Gregory IX made an appeal to the Sword Brethren, who were active in Livonia, to intervene in Finland. He may have thought they were more suited to the task than the Swedes, but it is also possible that this was an attempt to divert them from their feud with Baldwin in Livonia, which soon ended in open conflict, and persuade them to do what (in the eyes of the pope) they were supposed to be doing: converting pagans. However, in 1232 the Sword Brethren were also still engaged in a war with the Lithuanians. Although Baldwin was replaced by William of Modena in 1234, the Lithuanians' crushing defeat of the Sword Brethren at Saule in 1236 ended any possibility of their intervention in Finland.

Twelfth-century Scandinavian expeditions in the eastern Baltic region appear to have been plundering raids, although the perpetrators probably demanded a token conversion to Christianity in the process. According to Henry of Livonia, this is precisely what the Swedes did in Estonia in 1197.⁵⁵ The first recorded Swedish attempt to establish a permanent base was in 1220, at Leal (mod. Lihula, Estonia). It ended in disaster when the natives overran the fort and killed both the *riksjarl*, Karl, and his namesake and nephew, the bishop of Linköping.⁵⁶ Within a

⁵³ Jalmar Jaakkola, *Suomen Historia. 3: Varhaiskeskiaika* (Porvoo, 1958), pp. 198–258; Jouko Vahtola, 'Finnlands kirchenpolitische Verbindungen im frühen und mittleren 13. Jahrhundert', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* n.s. 32 (1984), 2–15. On the history of Thomas as a champion of Finland, see John Lind, 'Bishop Thomas in Recent Historiography – Views and Sources', in *Suomen varhaishistoria*, pp. 304–307.

⁵⁴ *Diplomatarium Suecanum*, 1, nos 245, 246, 250, pp. 251, 253–54; *Sveriges Traktater med Främmande Magter*, 1, no. 75, pp. 144–45; *Registrum Ecclesiae Åboensis*, no. 5, p. 3.

⁵⁵ Henry of Livonia, *Henrici Chronicon Livoniae* / *Henriku Liivimaa kroonika*, ed. and trans. Enn Tarvel (Tallinn, 1982), ch. I.13, p. 28.

⁵⁶ *Annales Suecici Medii Aevi: Svensk Medeltidsannalistik*, ed. Göte Paulsson (Lund, 1974), *Annales* 916–1263, p. 255, *Annales* 1208–1288, p. 259, both in the same volume. Here I use *riksjarl* to refer to the jarl of c. 1170–1266, who had responsibilities that extended beyond one region of the realm (*rike*) of Sweden and the right to taxes in certain areas, perhaps also landholdings connected to his office. From the appearance of Birger Brosa as 'jarl of the *Svear* and *Götar*' in the late twelfth century to the death of Birger Jarl

few years, Denmark and the Sword Brethren had between them conquered all of Estonia, and the southern shore of the Gulf of Finland was closed to Sweden.

Interest in Finland did not only come from the west, but from Rus' as well, but its extent is disputed. Several Slavic loanwords associated with the new religion entered the Finnish language in the early Middle Ages, such as *raamattu* (Bible), *pappi* (priest), *pakana* (pagan) and *risti* (cross), but it is impossible to know whether these arrived with traders, like many Christian artefacts, or as a result of missions. The sole written reference that might refer to the eleventh century in Finland is an entry for 1042 in the Russian *Primary Chronicle*, which tells us that Yaroslav 'conquered' the *Jem*, although their identification with Häme/Hämäläiset is uncertain.⁵⁷ Yaroslav Vladimirovich ('the Wise', d. 1054) was in a powerful position as undisputed ruler of Rus' after 1036, but 'conquest' in this case probably means the imposition of tribute. It does appear that there was a 'Russian period' in Tartto in Estonia, which ended around 1060, but there is no such evidence from eleventh-century Häme or Karelia.⁵⁸ If there were tribute payments, they were probably intermittent. Much later, writing of Birger Magnusson's expedition to Häme, the author of the *Erik Chronicle* makes the statement that '*thet samma land vart alt cristith – jak tror at ryztakonungen mistit*' ('that same land was wholly Christianized – I believe that the Russian king lost it'), implying that Häme had been subject to the Russians, but he is probably assuming a situation similar to that of his own time, when the Swedes were attempting to wrest Karelia from Novgorodian control.⁵⁹ There is also the reference to Novgorodian attacks in Pope Gregory IX's letter of 1229, and an enigmatic statement in his bull calling for a crusade to Tavastland in 1237 that 'enemies of the cross' were encouraging the *Tavaster* to apostatize, but who these enemies were or where he obtained this information is uncertain. In any case, instigation does not imply overlordship.

Archaeological Evidence for the Christianization of Finland

Archaeology cannot confirm or deny the occurrence of Swedish military expeditions, but it does indicate a slow but steady spread of Christian belief in Finland. Christian objects became common in Finland in the crusade period, particularly cross pendants of various types. Although it is probable that these had religious significance as well as aesthetic value to the inhabitants of the regions where they were manufactured, this cannot be certain in Finland. Nevertheless, their distribution in Varsinais-Suomi generally corresponds to that of inhumation burials. All the pendants come from the Baltic region, and most from Scandinavia,

(Magnusson) in 1266 the position was exclusively the property of various branches of the Folkung family.

⁵⁷ *Nestorskrönikan*, trans. Gabriella Oxenstierna (Stockholm, 1998), p. 127.

⁵⁸ Selirand, *Viron Rautakausi*, p. 60.

⁵⁹ *Erikskrönikan*, p. 32.

especially Gotland.⁶⁰ Burial datings have been made largely on the basis of coin finds, with the assistance of a relative chronology based on brooch styles.

The crusade period brought an end to cremation in western Finland, albeit by a slow process, probably due to influence from Sweden and the already Christianized Åland Islands. Evidence of structures that may have been bell-towers has been found at Myllymäki (Nousiainen) and Ristinpelto (Lieto) cemeteries in Varsinais-Suomi and Kirkailanmäki (Hollola) in Päijät-Häme.⁶¹ The first Christian artefacts were buried as grave goods.⁶² This implies use of Christian symbols rather than conversion. Cremation burial was gradually displaced by inhumation, and after 1150 by inhumation without grave goods, a clearer indication of Christian practice. In some cemeteries in the region of Åbo, burial with grave goods seems to have been followed by an intermediate period of burial with only costume accessories. The latest coin from the cemetery of Taskula (Maaria) was struck between 1135 and 1154, and was still associated with grave goods.⁶³ A man was buried with a sword at Rikala (Halikonlahti), in a cemetery with a coin which can be dated to 1167–95. By the thirteenth century, burials with pagan signatures had virtually disappeared from Varsinais-Suomi and Satakunta, but the picture is not consistent. Moreover, cremation burials were revived by those who used the cemetery of Myllymäki in the early part of that century.

The earliest shift to Christian burial practices may have occurred in the region north of this, the Eura-Yläne-Kalanti region. In Eura, weapon burials apparently ceased early in the twelfth century, but burial in costumes with brooches continued for some decades. In Yläne and the Kalanti-Laitila area burials with goods of any sort seem to have disappeared even before this. The pattern of change has been less easy to chart in the region to the east of this, although there is one inhumation cemetery coin dated to the period 1106–25 at Vilusenharju (Tampere).⁶⁴ In Vanajan Häme to the south another at Narva Rukoushuone (Vesilahti) has been dated to the last quarter of the twelfth century.⁶⁵ Purhonen believes that the absence of any evidence for an intermediate phase of burial with costume parts in Häme indicates a more sudden change from fully furnished to unfurnished burials that may be associated with an enforced change, perhaps the military expedition of the *Erik Chronicle*.⁶⁶ The evidence for early church building by wealthy farmers, referred to below, is also restricted to the regions of Varsinais-Suomi and Satakunta, where Christianity was established earlier.

⁶⁰ Paula Purhonen, *Kristinuskon saapumisesta Suomeen: Uskontoarkeologinen tutkimus* (Helsinki, 1998), pp. 112–14.

⁶¹ Purhonen, *Kristinuskon saapumisesta*, p. 135.

⁶² Purhonen, *Kristinuskon saapumisesta*, pp. 112–14.

⁶³ Purhonen, *Kristinuskon saapumisesta*, p. 137.

⁶⁴ Pekka Sarvas, *Länsi-Suomen ruumishautojen raha-ajoitukset: Suomen ja Skandinavian arkeologian lisensiaattitutkelmia* (Helsinki, 1972), p. 123.

⁶⁵ Sarvas, *Länsi-Suomen ruumishautojen raha-ajoitukset*, p. 124.

⁶⁶ Purhonen, *Kristinuskon saapumisesta*, p. 137.

In the crusade period settlement in Savo was very sparse. There are two known cemeteries in the Mikkeli region. Evidence of a structure that was a possibly a chapel or bell-tower has been found at both.⁶⁷ At Visulahti a bracteate dated to 1265–1346 was unearthed, and at both late ring brooches indicate use in the thirteenth century, if not earlier.⁶⁸ Further east, in Karelia, the form of graves and their goods began to diverge from that of western Finland in the Viking period. However, customs that differ from those of central Finland, such as the burials in graves with wooden frameworks at Koverila (Kaukola) and the eleventh- and twelfth-century burials under mounds (so-called 'kurgans') to the south-west of Lake Ladoga, are not specifically Karelian. The former resemble the Orthodox 'houses of the dead' (Russ. *grobniats*), found among both Slavic- and Finnic-speaking peoples in the north,⁶⁹ and the latter were also characteristic of some cemeteries in Ingria and other areas of Russia.⁷⁰ The framework graves may have been burials of an elite with strong links to Novgorod and its fur trade, particularly as they appear in the century when Karelians are first mentioned in the *Novgorod Chronicle*.⁷¹

Although there are fewer than twenty excavated crusade-period cemeteries in Karelia, in which there were approximately fifty furnished graves, they have provided a string of datings from grave goods in cemeteries throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries and into the thirteenth. The crusade period witnessed a gradual diminution in cremation burials and furnished graves, although some dead were still buried with possessions even in the fifteenth century. A marked shift in the orientation of graves is also observable around the turn of the fourteenth century. Of the datable grave goods with Christian symbols, cross pendants of western Baltic origin were found in six graves in the Karelian Isthmus, and a scattering of eastern Christian objects across Karelia. Tighter Novgorodian control of Karelia probably dates from 1278, when, according to the *Novgorod Chronicle*, Prince Dmitri Aleksandrovich conquered the region, but by this time Karelian culture was already assimilating to that of Novgorod.⁷² When Swedish expeditions penetrated Karelia at the end of the thirteenth century, they entered an area where Christianity was already established. The inhabitants of the region west of Lake

⁶⁷ Purhonen, *Kristinuskon saapumisesta*, pp. 123–25.

⁶⁸ Pirkko-Liisa Lehtosalo-Hilander and Kauko Pirinen, *Savon Historia 1: Esihistorian vuosituhannet ja keskiaika* (Kuopio, 1988), pp. 193–96.

⁶⁹ E.M. Kolpakov and E.N. Ryabzeva, 'A New Type of Chud Burial Construction', *Fennoscandia Archaeologica* 11 (1994), 77–86.

⁷⁰ Saksa, Uino and Hiekkanen, 'Ristiretkiaika', p. 456.

⁷¹ Saksa, Uino and Hiekkanen, 'Ristiretkiaika', p. 388.

⁷² According to the *Laurentian Chronicle*, Yaroslav Vsevolodovich converted the Karelians to Orthodoxy in 1227, but Lind has observed that it has the style of a praise text and was probably intended to present a retrospective picture of the historical link between Karelia and Russia and conversion to Orthodoxy: John H. Lind, 'De russiske krøniker som kilde til kontakter i Østersøområdet', in *Det 22. Nordiske historikermøte, Oslo 13.–18. august, 1994*, ed. Ingi Sigurðsson (Oslo, 1997), pp. 35–46 (here 45).

Ladoga must have already become accustomed to paying tithes and taxes.⁷³ The extent of any parish organization that may have pre-dated Swedish invasions is difficult to assess; the three districts ceded to Sweden in 1323 were probably recently settled at that time, although each was listed as a *pogosta*.⁷⁴

The Swedish 'Conquest'

Although Finland was on the periphery of the trade route from the Baltic Sea to the interior of Russia, there seems not to have been any great impetus to exert direct control over it before the thirteenth century. The Häme expedition of the *Erik Chronicle* probably occurred in 1238–39, after Gregory IX's appeal of 1237.⁷⁵ According to the *Novgorod Chronicle*, there was also a landing at the mouth of the Neva in 1240, which was beaten off.⁷⁶ This important link to Lake Ladoga, which had also been the target of earlier Scandinavian raids,⁷⁷ was probably the primary objective of thirteenth-century Swedish interventions in Finland and Karelia. The 1240 attack may been a private venture of Birger Magnusson, if he was indeed its leader, as recorded in the Russian *Testament of the Swedish King Magnus*, whether as a raid or an attempt to establish a base.⁷⁸ The chronicle lists *Sum* and *Jem* among the invaders, which, if correct, suggests that at least some of the inhabitants of Häme were fighting for the Swedes in 1240. However, there are other mistakes and improbabilities in the account. Both *Jem* and Swedes had raided in 1142, a century earlier, but there is no indication that these attacks were co-ordinated or that there was a tradition of alliance between them. Raids by *Jem* alone were recorded in 1149 and 1228.⁷⁹

⁷³ Throughout Rus' many taxes appear to have been based on pre-Ryurikid tribal tributes: Yaroslav Nikolaevich Schapov, *State and Church in Early Russia, 10th–13th Centuries* (New Rochelle, N.Y., 1993), pp. 87–99.

⁷⁴ At the end of the fourteenth century there were six parishes in Orthodox Karelia: Erkki Kuujo, *Ortodoksisen kirkon alkuvaiheet Suomessa* (Helsinki, 1955), p. 169.

⁷⁵ On the dating of the 'second crusade', see Jarl Gallén, 'Kring Birger jarl och andra korståget till Finland; En omdatering och en omvärdering', *Historisk Tidskrift för Finland* 31 (1946), 55–70, and Rolf Pipping, *Kommentar till Erikskrönikan* (Helsinki, 1926), p. 5. The former favours the dates 1238–39, the latter 1249.

⁷⁶ For the problems surrounding the Russian accounts of the Neva campaign of 1240, see John Lind, 'Early Russian-Swedish Rivalry: The Battle on the Neva in 1240 and Birger Magnusson's Second Crusade to Tavastia', *Scandinavian Journal of History* 16 (1991), 269–95, and on the contingents in the attacking army, pp. 276–77.

⁷⁷ *The Chronicle of Novgorod 1016–1471*, trans. Robert Michell and Nevill Forbes (London, 1914), pp. 41–43.

⁷⁸ Lind, 'Early Russian-Swedish Rivalry', p. 279.

⁷⁹ *Chronicle of Novgorod*, pp. 17–20. On the Votians and Ingrians (Russ. *Vod* and *Izhora*) see Pirjo Uino, 'Inkerinmaan esihistoria', in *Inkeri: Historia, kansa, kulttuuri*, ed.

The threat to Novgorod's trade route increased towards the end of the thirteenth century. Before this, there is no record of Swedish–Novgorodian conflict within Finland. Various scholars have suggested that there was a 'boundary' between Sweden and Novgorod before 1323; perhaps, after Häme was brought under control, the Kymenjoki (Kymi River) but there is no record of any agreement, and no reason why Savo and Karelia west of Ladoga should not have been a 'no-man's land' as far as Sweden and Novgorod were concerned.⁸⁰ Settlement may have come from both directions, but most of the pressure in the later Middle Ages certainly came from the west, so that encroachment on Karelian fishing and hunting grounds became a constant source of irritation and cause of retaliatory raids into Swedish territory.

After twenty-four years of relative peace, two attacks were made on the Ladoga region in 1280 and 1283, the perpetrators named as *nemtsy*, in this case almost certainly people from Finland, whether Swedes or natives.⁸¹ The Novgorodians had first adopted this pejorative term ('mutes') for Swedes in 1188, thus lumping them together with others of the Latin Church. It was indicative of the deteriorating relationship between adherents of the Western and Eastern churches in the north. In 1292 Novgorodian forces raided Häme, and in the following year the Swedes launched the so-called 'third crusade' into Karelia and founded the fortress of Viborg (mod. Vyborg, Russia). The extent to which this effort may have been inspired by religious motives is difficult to assess, but it is interesting that the *Erik Chronicle* calls neither this nor the earlier expedition to Tavastia a crusade. It emphasizes that both were directed at pagans (Sw. *hedno*), but these are often distinguished from Russians (*rytza*).⁸² It appears that the author regarded Karelia, and probably Ingria and Votia as well, as pagan regions, whether or not he took into account their status relative to Pskov or Novgorod. That he believed pagan lands around the Gulf of Finland were somehow subject to Novgorod is indicated by his statement that the 'Russian king' lost Häme, despite its probable anachronism. The Novgorodians failed to dislodge the Swedes from Viborg, but they did repulse an expedition to Keksholm in 1294. Some of these attacks may have been local initiatives, but Törgils Knutsson, *mark* and regent for the young King Birger of Sweden, was certainly behind the founding of a fortress at the mouth

Pekka Nevalainen and Hannes Sihvo (Helsinki, 1991), pp. 11–34, and Heikki Kirkinen, 'Inkerin keskiaika ja uuden ajan alku', in *Inkeri*, pp. 35–66.

⁸⁰ Seppo Suvanto, 'Ruotsin ja Venäjän raja ennen Pähkinäsaaren rauhaa', *Historian Päivät 1985*, ed. Rauno Endén (Helsinki, 1985), pp. 49–65.

⁸¹ Heikki Kirkinen, *Karjala idän kulttuuripiirissä: Bysantin ja Venäjän kulttuuriyhteyksistä keskiajan Karjalaan* (Helsinki, 1963), pp. 92–93. On the term *nemtsy*, see John H. Lind, 'Consequences of the Baltic Crusades in Target Areas: The Case of Karelia', in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, ed. Alan V. Murray (Aldershot, 2001), pp. 137–42.

⁸² *Erikskrönikan*, pp. 72–73, 77–88, 211–12.

of the Neva in 1300, Landskrona. Once again, Novgorodian forces destroyed it soon afterwards.⁸³

Thomas's successor as bishop of Åbo was Björn (or Bero), chaplain and chancellor to King Erik Eriksson (1222–29 and 1234–50) according to the *Catalogus Episcoporum*, presumably an ally of Birger Jarl as well as the king.⁸⁴ He began his work in 1248 or 1249. It has often been assumed that the diocese of Finland was looked after by the Dominican friars in the interim period between the resignation of Thomas and the arrival of Björn. This is possible, as they were certainly active in Estonia, but no Finnish convent is known of this early. Their convent in Reval (mod. Tallinn, Estonia) was not finally established until 1248, and they were in Finland by the following year.⁸⁵ Their convents were always situated in urban centres, but where the first one in Finland was founded is unclear; it may have been at Nousiainen, or in Åbo, where it is first recorded in 1309. Both Dominican and Franciscan friars were probably active in Finland long before this. The Dominicans were certainly suited to the task of preaching and looking after newly converted souls, having been given this right in 1216. They were probably involved in missionary work in Ingria and Savo-Karelia in 1255–56, and in Karelia in the 1290s. Johannes, bishop of Finland from 1286 to 1289, was himself a former prior at the Dominican convent of Sigtuna.

In the fourteenth century the castles at Åbo, Tavastehus (mod. Hämeenlinna, Finland), Viborg and Raseborg (mod. Raasepori, Finland) became the bases for Swedish administration in Finland. According to the *Erik Chronicle*, Viborg was built of stone soon after the campaign of 1293. Åbo and Tavastehus may also have been built around the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.⁸⁶ If a fifteenth-century document is correct in stating that the first *hövetsman* (head of district or castle) for Varsinais-Suomi was appointed in 1280, this would be a likely time for the fort's construction.⁸⁷ However, they were not the first Swedish fortifications in Finland.

It is possible that the earliest permanently garrisoned Swedish fort was Vanhalinna near Lieto in Varsinais-Suomi. The place had been occupied in the

⁸³ *Erikskrönikan*, pp. 83–88, *Finlands Medeltidsurkunder*, 1, no. 233, pp. 84–95. *Marsk* appears in the Folkung Period as the title of a leading member of the king's household or council who had military responsibilities (cf. Eng. *marshal*).

⁸⁴ See Paulus Juusten, *Catalogus et ordinaria succession episcoporum Finlandensium*, ed. Simo Heininen (Helsinki, 1988), p. 53.

⁸⁵ Tapio Salminen, 'Dominicans in Tallinn, Viipuri and Turku', in *Dominikaanit Suomessa ja Itämeren Alueella Keskiajalla: Dominikaanit Daciassa ja Suomessa Keskiajalla Symposium Turussa 18–20.8.1999*, ed. Marjo Kaartinen et al. (Turku, 2003), pp. 37–56 (here 38, 48).

⁸⁶ Datings of the earliest levels of these castles have been made by comparison with fortifications in Sweden, not always a reliable method.

⁸⁷ See Birgitta Fritz, *Hus, land och län: Förvaltningen i Sverige 1250–1434*, 2 vols (Stockholm, 1972–73), 2: 115.

Bronze Age, but was then re-occupied in the early eleventh century, before being abandoned in the early fourteenth. Finds of some 150 armour-piercing arrowheads around it have led some to suggest that it was attacked by the Novgorodians, probably in 1318.⁸⁸ The best candidate for the *taffwesta borg* of the *Erik Chronicle*, built after the expedition to Häme, is Hakoinen (Janakkala).⁸⁹ Archaeological finds such as brick and armour-piercing arrowheads and their datings clearly indicate a Swedish occupation.⁹⁰ The fort differs from Finnish ones in that it had an outer bailey below the outcrop where the main building was situated. Both of these forts are on communication routes from the coast to the interior, although Vanhalinna is too far from Åbo or Koroinen to be ideally situated for their defence. If it was occupied by the Swedes, both it and Hakoinen, which is on the edge of the settled region of Häme, were presumably intended to establish a Swedish presence in Finland while allowing easy relief and communication with the homeland.

A fort at Vartiokylä near Helsinki had had two periods of (Swedish) occupation, the first during the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.⁹¹ Although the style of construction resembled the native forts of Häme, the region in which it was built was sparsely inhabited before Swedish settlement began. The fort could have been built as defence against any possible native reaction to this, or against attacks from Novgorod, as a refuge or a watch post. A fourth fort that may have been used by the Swedes was Linnosaari (near Valkeakoski), although the find of a single crossbow bolt head is tenuous evidence. The fortifications were of wood, of which one piece was dated to c. 1225 (+/-35).⁹² It may have been occupied for only a short time, either during a Swedish occupation of Häme, or because of the Novgorodian threat. Like Vanhalinna and Tavastehus, this fort was on an important communication route. Forts such as Linnosaari or Vanhalinna could, of course, have been occupied by both Finns and Swedes together. Both had a common interest in defending Suomi and Häme from Novgorodians. In this respect it is interesting that many of the Finnish hillforts were clearly in use long after 1250.⁹³

Novgorod also responded to both the Western threat and the danger of rebellion by building or strengthening fortifications, at Kopor'e (Kaprio) in Ingria in 1297,

⁸⁸ Jukka Luoto, *Liedon Vanhalinnan mäkilinna* (Helsinki, 1984); Hannu Mansikkaniemi, Jukka Luoto and Esa Hiltunen, *Liedon Historia*, ed. Kari Suistoranta et al., 2 vols (Turku, 1988), 1: 160–61.

⁸⁹ *Erikskrönikan*, p. 32.

⁹⁰ Taavitsainen, *Ancient Hillforts*, pp. 164–69. Brick was not used by the Swedes as early as 1238, but the first fort may have been of wood.

⁹¹ Markku Heikkinen, 'Helsingin Vartiokylän linna osoittautui keskiaikaiseksi', *Suomen Keskiajan Arkeologian Seura* 2 (2003), 34–42.

⁹² Taavitsainen, *Ancient Hillforts*, p. 168.

⁹³ Taavitsainen, *Ancient Hillforts*, pp. 229–30.

Keksholm by 1310 and Nöteborg (mod. Shlissel'burg, Russia) in 1322.⁹⁴ The period of construction indicates that this was a response to the Western threat, although Karelians, or some of them, had tried to rebel (to stop paying tribute?) in 1269 and rebelled again in 1314.⁹⁵ The presence of the Swedes constituted both a threat and a potential ally to the Karelians, and probably made rebellion more likely.

Sweden Tightens its Grip

According to the *Erik Chronicle*, Sweden did more than build castles to secure its hold on Finland. The author claims that '*the satto thet land med crismen*' ('they settled the land with Christian men').⁹⁶ Pohjanmaa, Varsinais-Suomi, Uusimaa (Sw. Nyland) and the interior regions near Viborg are known to have been settled by Swedish immigrants.⁹⁷ Place-names provide good evidence of settlement, without indicating how or when this settlement took place. The *Erik Chronicle* implies that there was a deliberate plantation by royal government and possibly the Church, but their power to implement such a policy may be questioned. Medieval views of *gens* or *natio* differed from modern concepts of national identity, but there was an awareness that settlement of newly conquered regions by people who were already adapted to the social *mores* of the new rulers strengthened their hold on these areas, besides providing income from their produce. In various parts of Europe such colonization was encouraged by powerful nobles or military orders, but large-scale settlement such as that east of the Elbe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries gained its own impetus, with families or communities of peasants or townsfolk leaving for newly conquered lands.

A steady Swedish immigration is believed to have occurred into Varsinais-Suomi throughout the crusade period, and some historians and linguists believe that it began in Uusimaa before Birger Magnusson's crusade. There is little evidence for royal, noble or ecclesiastical initiative in either region. There were no monastic foundations to bring wild areas under cultivation and there is no evidence of aristocratic landholding complexes in the thirteenth century. The high proportion of place-names in Uusimaa that contain personal names suggests spontaneous colonization by *bönder*, most likely part of the general expansion of agriculture that also brought parts of northern Sweden under cultivation during the late thirteenth century. It is also possible that some of the first colonists of the post-1250 period were fleeing the region north of Lake Mälaren after Birger

⁹⁴ *Finlands Medeltidsurkunder*, 1, no. 251, p. 99; Erkki Kuujo, Eino Puuramo and J. Sarkanen, *Käkisälmen kaupungin ja maalaiskunnan vaiheita* (Lahti, 1958), p. 50.

⁹⁵ Kimmo Katajala, *Suomalainen kapina: Talonpoikaislevottomuudet ja poliittinen kulttuuri Suomessa Ruotsin ajalla n. 1150–1800* (Helsinki, 2002), p. 102.

⁹⁶ *Erikskrönikan*, p. 32.

⁹⁷ Yrjö Kaukiainen, 'Viipurin Läänin ruotsalaisasutuksen synty varhaiskeskiajalla', *Historiallinen Aikakauskirja* 106 (1974), 11–145 (here 120–21).

Jarl's suppression of mid-century rebellions and the introduction of new taxes. If this was the case, the refugees secured only a temporary respite. If there was an element of encouragement by the Crown for Swedes to settle in Uusimaa, the object was presumably to secure its hold on the north coast of the Gulf of Finland. After the foundation of Viborg, Swedish communities also settled in isolated parts of Karelia that had apparently remained unsettled by Finns or Karelians, and in this case royal encouragement seems probable rather than possible.⁹⁸

Pohjanmaa was also colonized in the same period. Läntinen suggests that this began in the late thirteenth century, mostly from Norrland in Sweden, shortly before the first written evidence of the immigrants appeared.⁹⁹ Uninhabited land in these northern regions was *allmänning*, common land available to all, and the immigration was spontaneous. By the fourteenth century, Swedish-speakers lived in the coastal regions from the region of present-day Kokkola in the north to northern Satakunta (Kyrö) in the south. They probably absorbed some Finnish speakers on the coast, but may have caused others to move elsewhere. As in the other regions settled by immigrants, the native population there was sparse.

A clue to the existence of Swedish immigrant settlements in Finland is given by studies of medieval taxation, which suggest that some of the later taxes were already in place in the thirteenth century. As in Sweden itself, in Finland there was a variety of different taxes based on land area or households (Sw. *bol*, *mantal*, *fullskatt*). These are known mainly from records of the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, after the *slottslän* had been created, that is administrative districts, each of which was centred on a castle (in Finland the castles of Åbo, Raseborg, Tavastehus and Viborg). There is no way of knowing how much revenue was raised in Finland in 1300, as there are no extant tax records before the later fourteenth century, and those for Pohjanmaa and interior regions belong to the period after the *rök* tax had begun to supplant the *krok* in western Finland. However, Orrman estimated that half the number of tax *gårdar* (taxable farms) that existed in Varsinais-Suomi in the early sixteenth century must already have been in place in the late thirteenth, and that the oldest Swedish taxes on produce might go back to the late twelfth century.¹⁰⁰ The assessment of *gårdar* as tax units in eastern Uusimaa occurred in the first decades of the fourteenth century at the latest, and earlier in western

⁹⁸ Per Olof Sjöstrand, *Hur Finland vanns för Sverige: En historia för nationalstater* (Uppsala, 1995); Kaukiainen, 'Viipurin Läänin ruotsalaisasutuksen synty varhaiskeskiajalla', 120–21.

⁹⁹ For instance, *Finlands Medeltidsurkunder*, 1, no. 242, p. 97 (from 1303). See Aarre Läntinen, 'Pohjanmaan ruotsalaiset – valloittajia vai uudisasukkaita?', in *Suomen varhaishistoria*, pp. 317–32.

¹⁰⁰ Eljas Orrman, 'Den Medeltida bebyggelseutveckling i Egentliga Finland i ljuset av medeltidens skatteenheter', *Historisk Tidskrift för Finland* 64 (1979), 280–95 (here 294).

Uusimaa.¹⁰¹ The law of Hälsingland (Sw. *Hälsingelagen*) was applied to the Swedish-speaking inhabitants of both sides of the Gulf of Bothnia, all referred to as 'Hälsingar', including those in parts of Satakunta and Varsinais-Suomi. In the peace agreement of Nöteborg the Gulf of Bothnia was called *Helsingh haff* ('Hälsing Sea').¹⁰²

In the early fourteenth century different laws were enforced in different regions. *Kyrörätt* applied in most of Satakunta and *Tavasträtt* elsewhere in the interior of Finland. Although *rätt* may be roughly translated as 'law', contemporary references concern mainly taxation. In the thirteenth century customary laws must have continued to apply in the inland areas, but the local 'laws' were supplemented with tax obligations. One tax unit, the *krok* (Finn. *koukku* or, in eastern parts, *aatra/ardha*), may be based on a pre-Swedish tribute, as a comparable tax existed south of the Gulf of Finland and a virtually identical tax, the *plug*, was levied in Karelia by Novgorod.¹⁰³ The names derived from those meaning 'ard' (Sw. *ård*), the primitive plough, and presumably originated as a tribute in farming areas, but like most taxes, it appears to have been levied in various forms, as produce or coin, but in the Finnish-speaking areas, furs. These were the main measure of value in the inland economy, so much so that the modern Finnish word for money, *raha*, originated as a word for squirrel skin. The *krok* first appears in a royal letter of 1334. By the late thirteenth century, possibly earlier, the Church also took tributes in the form of furs. In Tavastland (including Satakunta) a church (or priest's) tax was levied in furs or money (four 'white furs' or three *ore*) alongside the king's *krok*.¹⁰⁴

The *Catalogus episcoporum* mentions a *tributum finorum* payable to the king after Björn became bishop in Finland in 1249.¹⁰⁵ Whether this was a tax already payable to the bishop in Christianized areas (for instance, a tenth of a royal fur tribute), or part of a royal tax levied by the bishop on behalf of the king and then surrendered to the king in 1249, is not known. There was a *rughskat* (fur tax) payable to the bishop that was transferred to the king in mid-century.¹⁰⁶ This probably marks the beginning of taxation by the realm as opposed to the Church. Even before this a *matskott* (food tax) was paid to priests before the regular

¹⁰¹ Eljas Orrman, 'Medeltida skatteenheter i södra Finlands svenskbygder', *Historisk Tidskrift för Finland* 68 (1983), 217–33 (here 231–33).

¹⁰² *Finlands Medeltidsurkunder*, 1, no. 313, pp. 121–22.

¹⁰³ Aulis Oja, 'Krok', in *Kulturhistorisk Lexikon för nordisk medeltid från vikingatid till reformationstid*, ed. Jarl Gallén, Carl Jacob Gardberg, Gunvar Kerkkonen and Helge Pohjolan-Pirhonen, 22 vols (Helsinki, 1956–78), 9: 395.

¹⁰⁴ *Registrum Ecclesiae Åboensis*, no. 725, pp. 585–86.

¹⁰⁵ *Suomen keskiajan piispainkronikan n.s. Palmsköldin katkelma*, ed. Aarno Maliniemi (Helsinki, 1945), 267. This is the only surviving section of a fifteenth-century version of the chronicle. The version referred to in note 84, compiled and edited by Paulus Juusten, dates to the sixteenth century.

¹⁰⁶ Kauko Pirinen, *Kymmenysverotus Suomessa ennen kirkkoreduktiota* (Helsinki, 1962), pp. 137–38, 176–79.

canonical *tionde* (tithe) was levied. As in the case of secular taxes, those paid to the Church differed fundamentally in type in Varsinais-Suomi and coastal regions, where taxes were paid according to yield of agricultural produce and meat from animal husbandry, and in the interior, where they were fixed by statute and usually paid in furs. The *tionde* was paid in accordance with *Hälsingelagen* or so-called 'Swedish law' (*ius suecicum*) in Varsinais-Suomi and southern Satakunta, for upkeep of the local church and priest, but the bishop also took a fixed tribute. In other coastal regions tax was paid as food under a system similar to the Swedish *gästning*, which originated as a right of hospitality for the king, his agents or for a lord, in households on their lands. According to Pirinen, this tax, paid according to *ius finnicum* ('Finnish law'), was levied in the areas with the oldest farms. The *tionde* was extended to Savo in 1329, soon after the border treaty with Novgorod, and also to the northernmost *socknar* (parishes) of Pohjanmaa.¹⁰⁷

From the time of Björn's appointment (and probably earlier) bishops co-operated closely with the Dominican friars. The mendicants were well suited to dealing with the rural population, and provided invaluable service in collecting ecclesiastical taxes.¹⁰⁸ However, problems with tax collection continued long after the Church had installed its priests throughout the settled regions, particularly in inland areas. In 1329, when Magnus Eriksson's government demanded that the inhabitants of inland areas pay the tithe, he included not only Savo and Karelia, but also Häme. These demands were followed by another from the archbishop of Uppsala in 1330, and yet another in 1335.¹⁰⁹ Four letters had already been sent in 1329, demanding that the tax of four furs be paid. This had been reduced to three after the Novgorodian raids of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, and the *Hämäläiset* had refused to accept a return to its former level. As late as 1370 Bishop Johannes Petersson was threatening punishment for the peasants of Savo, who were not paying the fur tax.¹¹⁰

It has sometimes been suggested that the Swedish *ledning* obligations were also extended to Finland. In its wider sense, the term *ledning* appears to mean anything from 'expedition' to 'fleet', but the detailed provisions of the Svealand law codes concern a levy of men and ships raised on a rotational basis to patrol coastal waters and the taxes that were raised in lieu of this service.¹¹¹ These provisions indicate

¹⁰⁷ Armas Luukko, 'Skinnskatt', in *Kulturhistorisk Lexikon för nordisk medeltid från vikingatid till reformationstid*, 15: 532–33; *Registrum Ecclesiae Åboensis*, no. 111, pp. 70–71.

¹⁰⁸ Jarl Gallén, 'Dominikanerorden', in *Kulturhistorisk Lexikon för nordisk medeltid från vikingatid till reformationstid*, 3: 174–85.

¹⁰⁹ *Finlands Medeltidsurkunder*, 1, nos 371, 373, 374, p. 149, no. 383, p. 151, no. 425, p. 164.

¹¹⁰ *Finlands Medeltidsurkunder*, 1, no. 781, p. 329 (*Registrum Ecclesiae Åboensis*, no. 211, pp. 140–41).

¹¹¹ The earliest of these law codes (*landskapslagar*) is *Upplandslagen*, dated to 1296. *Södermannalagen*, *Hälsingelagen* and *Västmannalagen* all belong to the first half of the

that the *leding* fleet levy was already in decline by the time Finland was linked to Sweden.¹¹² A close counterpart to the *leding* was the system for keeping watch over the coast. In Finland both Swedish and Finnish place-names (particularly those containing *vartio*, derived from Old Swedish *varþ*, *var/d* and *vård*) suggest that some form of regular watch was practised in coastal regions, perhaps regulated in the same way as *vakt* in the law codes of Svealand.¹¹³ It is not certain that all 'watch sites' were there because of enemy threat, as there were other risks to livelihood, such as wild animals, but there are far more of these place-names on the coasts of Varsinais-Suomi and Uusimaa than in Pohjanmaa or inland areas. Evidence for the *leding* patrol fleet is less easy to find. However, Kaukiainen pointed out that the 1347 butter tax in Virolahti and Vehkalahti (eastern Uusimaa) corresponded to that in *Södermannalagen*, and that the harbour settlements of Virolahti, Porvoo and Sipoo all consisted of seventy-two to seventy-five houses, and could therefore correspond to the Swedish *hamnor*.¹¹⁴ In the law codes of Svealand the *hamna* (pl. *hamnor*) is an administrative unit that has an integral connection to the raising of the *leding* (whether levy or relief taxes). Jokipii also argued that there was probably a *leding* in Satakunta, since the Finnish word *satakunta* corresponds to Swedish *hundare*, but it is virtually certain that the *leding* (patrol) fleet of the law codes appeared after 1150, and was not integral to the original *hundare*.¹¹⁵ It may have been introduced later, either as fleet levy or tax, or both, but evidence for Swedish secular administration in Satakunta during the early and mid-thirteenth century is virtually non-existent.

The Nature of the Conquest

Despite the difficulties, the weight of evidence suggests that there was no permanent organization above local chieftain level in Finland and Karelia, and certainly no reason to assume any form of polity conforming to any of the main settlement regions. The number of hillforts and hoards and lack of conformity between them and settlements suggests political fragmentation, rather than central organization. There was no consistency in burial practice even within the three settlement regions, and the fact that there was a return to pagan funerary practices at Myllymäki, in contrast to the surrounding area, supports the contention that authority was largely in the hands of chieftains that dominated villages or groups of villages. The sparse population and politically fragmentary nature of Finland

fourteenth century.

¹¹² On the thorny problem of the *leding*, see Niels Lund, *Lið, leding og landværn* (Roskilde, 1996), especially pp. 74–82, on Sweden.

¹¹³ Väinö Voionmaa, 'Ledung'-laitoksen muistoja Lounais-Suomen rannikoilla', *Historian Arkisto* 34 (1925), 1–44.

¹¹⁴ Yrjö Kaukiainen, *Virolahden historia* (Virolahti, 1970), pp. 80–91.

¹¹⁵ Maunu Jokipii, *Hämeen ristiretki* (Helsinki, 1965), p. 240.

and Karelia made them easy prey to more advanced and powerful neighbours, but they also presented their own problems to the 'conquerors', in that they had virtually no administrative structures to build upon and no central authority to usurp. The building of government administration was therefore a slow process.

The level of subjection achieved by the 'second crusade' may not have been much higher than that achieved by previous attacks, but there is no further record of hostility within Häme. During the Folkung period (1250–1374) the Swedish kingdom was better equipped to follow up the success of this campaign and strengthen its hold on central and eastern Finland than it had been earlier. In the Middle Ages, the construction of strong fortresses was the key to the permanent holding of new conquests. In the eastern Baltic region, the natives lacked the resources and technological know-how to reduce them, although Estonians and Lithuanians learned quickly. Swedish fortresses in Finland failed to prevent long-distance forays into Finland by Russian forces, but they did prevent conquest for four hundred years. Above all, the foundation of the fortresses of Åbo, Tavastehus and Viborg provided the basis for the growth of secular administration, while Åbo and Viborg both grew into towns.

Despite the interest of the author of the *Erik Chronicle* in knightly exploits and fighting for the faith, even his account of Birger's expedition hardly suggests a bloody campaign. Within the disunited settlement area of Häme there may have been both pro- and anti-Christian factions. The 'crusade' may have been no more than an episode in a long process of Christianization and absorption by a more powerful neighbour. It was probably the integration of Finland into the ecclesiastical province of Uppsala and the increase in ecclesiastical taxes, which therefore became associated with Christianity, that led to the return to pagan habits at Myllymäki and the 'pagan reaction' in Häme. The popular attitude to ecclesiastical taxation may be reflected in Henrik's *Surmavirsi*, since he is killed by a Finnish peasant convert, Lalli, for taking too much from his house without asking. Lalli is portrayed in an almost sympathetic light. Sporadic opposition to increasing taxation was encountered throughout the Middle Ages, occasionally in the form of local rebellions led by elected leaders. There is no evidence whatever that such rebellions were 'Finnish' rebellions against Swedish rule. They were comparable to the peasant rebellions elsewhere in Europe, a response to the general increase in the weight of royal taxation. It appears that opposition to the thirteenth-century Swedish 'conquest' was little more coherent or long-lasting, a reflection of the lack of any 'Finnish' or even regional identity and the undeveloped state of political structures. Nor is there much evidence of hostility between Finnish speakers and Swedish colonists. In the Middle Ages the most important distinction was between peasantry or tax-paying *bönder* (free farmers) and landlords, and no administrative or legal documents make a distinction between Swedish and Finnish speakers.

A contributory factor to the relatively easy absorption of Finland into the kingdom of Sweden may have been that elements of the pre-conquest native elite were able to participate in the new administration, a circumstance that itself may

have arisen from relatively bloodless conquest, but it has proved very difficult to trace Finnish roots for any late medieval landholders. The question is not one of incorporation into the upper nobility, which was already a privileged elite in the thirteenth century and became increasingly exclusive in the later Middle Ages, but of inclusion among the lower nobility. The sources are poor and those who remained or became landowners probably adopted the language of the ruling class.¹¹⁶ Nevertheless, a number of *moisio*-sites, such as those at Nousiainen and Lieto, correspond to later medieval manors, and are close to both Iron Age cemeteries with rich burials and sites of early churches that were constructed before parish organization.¹¹⁷ These early churches were presumably built on the initiative of a local elite, a pattern similar to that identified in Sweden itself.¹¹⁸ It is also likely that some of Finnish origin became secular *frälse*, that is those who were exempt from taxation in return for military service with a horse. After the reign of Magnus Ladulås (1274–90) wealthier *bönder* chose to take this step throughout medieval Sweden. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the centres of administration were granted for specific terms to Swedish magnates, with all their estates and rights of taxation. Both they and their stewards were connected to Sweden by family ties, while their retainers probably intermarried with the richer settlers or natives and became the lesser nobility in the localities.

Secular Swedish intervention in Finland may be said to have developed in three stages: raiding and trading before the mid-twelfth century, to which was added the ingredient of demands to convert to the new religion in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, and finally the establishment of a permanent presence in the mid- and late thirteenth century. There seems little doubt that most of Finland was Christianized more through influence than force, but some force was required to impose the rule and taxes of the Church. This occurred when ecclesiastical appeals coincided with Swedish interest in securing a permanent foothold in Finland. The north shore of the Gulf of Finland was its best route to the Karelian Isthmus and Ladoga, which would have secured control of an important trade route from Rus'. That Finland was not absorbed by a neighbour before this was largely because Christian kingdoms and military orders had closer and richer heathen lands to subjugate first. Sweden had clear advantages over other (apparently stronger) powers that might have shown an interest in a more permanent presence in Finland, from geographical proximity and long association.

Once Sweden had secured its hold on central Finland, it attempted to expand into Karelia. There is good reason to believe that Karelia assumed a strategic

¹¹⁶ Erik Anthoni, *Finlands medeltida frälse och 1500-tals adel* (Helsinki, 1970).

¹¹⁷ Georg Haggren, 'Moisio – Kartano – Kirkko: Suurtalot ja kristinuskon juurtuminen varsinaiseen Suomeen', *Suomen keskiajan arkeologian seura* 1 (2005), 12–26 (here 22–24).

¹¹⁸ See, for instance, Olle Ferm and Sigurd Rahmqvist, 'Stormannakyrkor i Uppland under äldre medeltid', in *Studier i äldre historia: Tillägnade Herman Schück 5/4 1985*, ed. Robert Sandberg (Stockholm, 1984), pp. 67–83, and Ann Catherine Bonnier, *Kyrkorna berättar: Upplands Kyrkor 1250–1350* (Uppsala, 1987), pp. 224–36.

and economic importance to Novgorod that made close control imperative only when this danger that Sweden might seize control of Keksholm and the Neva route became clear. Novgorod's fortress construction in this region began only after 1290. The effect of the creation of a frontier, formalized in 1323, between Sweden and Novgorod and between Western and Eastern churches was arguably to strengthen the Swedish and 'Russian' identities of the natives on each side of the border. Warfare in the region increasingly adopted the character of a Swedish–Novgorodian struggle, which probably increased the scale of destruction to a level unknown in the earlier Iron Age. Opposition to taxation aside, there is little clue as to how native attitudes may have changed in the crusade period, but the people of Varsinais-Suomi and Häme must have come to identify Karelians with those who attacked them and vice versa. This is certainly reflected in later written sources; to the subjects of the Swedish Crown, all those east of the 1323 border were *ryssar* ('Russians') and to Novgorod and its allies all those to the west were *nemtsy* – there is no further mention of *Jem*. The 1323 frontier was not, of course, an impenetrable curtain, and people from both sides must have crossed it frequently during hunting, fishing or trading expeditions, but its very existence must have reinforced a feeling of 'them and us'. On its western side the material culture of Finland became increasingly western European, while that of Karelia became Russian. Even before this occurred, as competition for control of trade routes and Roman hostility towards the Orthodox Church intensified, many in Häme and Karelia may have welcomed Swedish and Novgorodian domination as the price of effective defence. To a large extent the natives were reliant upon their new masters to protect them.

The consolidation of Sweden's hold on Finland was a slow process. At the end of the reign of Magnus Ladulås administration in 'Österland' was still rudimentary. Collection of taxes in the interior appears to have been largely in the hands of the Church and its agents and must have been a fairly haphazard business. The parish (Sw. *socken*, Finn. *pitäjä*) must have been the most important administrative district for both ecclesiastical and secular tax collection in the thirteenth century. By contrast, Sweden's hold on Finland was not placed under serious threat until the Muscovite invasion of 1495.

PART II

Crusade and Mission

Chapter 5

Pope Honorius III and Mission and Crusades in the Baltic Region

*Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt*¹

Around 1180 Meinhard, a regular canon from the house of Segeberg near Lübeck, set up a mission among the pagans in Livonia.² Faced with the resistance and apostasy of the Livs, he and his collaborators eventually decided to appeal to the Curia for support and military assistance, and their petitions led to a series of papally authorized crusades. These were not the first crusades that had been proclaimed in the Baltic region. In 1147 Pope Eugenius III (1145–53) had sanctioned a crusade against the pagan Slavs (known to the Germans as Wends) north of the Elbe and in the early 1170s Pope Alexander III (1159–81) had authorized a crusade in support of a new missionary project in Estonia.³ It was, however, only really with the crusades in defence of the Livonian mission that papally authorized crusades became a recurrent phenomenon in north-eastern Europe. As the missionary work in the Baltic expanded in the thirteenth century, the popes continued to endorse the mission and crusades there. But it was during the pontificate of Honorius III (1216–27) that papal ideas on the conversion of non-Christians underwent significant changes. This was to influence not only the relations between Rome and the missions in the Baltic region but also the papal policy concerning the crusades there.

The twelfth-century popes had supported the various missions among the Baltic pagans when asked to do so, and the Livonian mission had therefore received papal attention from its early stages. Popes Clement III (1187–91) and Celestine III (1191–98) issued a series of letters confirming the metropolitan rights of the archbishopric of Hamburg-Bremen over the new see at Üxküll (mod. Ikšķile, Latvia) and

¹ This chapter offers a further exploration of some ideas touched upon in my *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades 1147–1254* (Leiden, 2007). It is based on research done while I was a Carlsberg Visiting Fellow at Clare Hall, University of Cambridge, and I should like to thank the Carlsberg Foundation for financial support. I also want to thank the Danish Research Council for funding my current postdoctoral work during which this article was completed.

² Henry of Livonia, *Heinrici Chronicon Livoniae*, ed. and trans. Leonid Arbusow and Albert Bauer, *Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters: Freiherr vom Stein-Gedächtnisausgabe*, 24 (Darmstadt, 1959), ch. I.2–3, p. 4.

³ Eugenius III, *Epistolae et privilegia*, in PL 180: 1203–4 (11 April 1147); *Diplomatarium Danicum*, ed. Niels Skyum-Nielsen et al. (København, 1957–), 1/3, no. 27 (11 September 1171 × 1172).

Meinhard's consecration as bishop there.⁴ They also gave the missionary bishops in Livonia various permissions and authorizations which aimed at facilitating their work and their recruitment of new missionaries.⁵ In his letter *Is qui ecclesiam* of 1201 Pope Innocent III (1198–1216) even offered the missionaries organizational advice, suggesting that they join together in a new association, with one rule and one habit, irrespective of their previous religious affiliation.⁶

This support for the Livonian mission was completely in line with the way that the popes of the early and central Middle Ages had been engaged in external mission, that is, mission among non-Christians. They were happy to support ongoing ventures, but they left the planning and financing of new missionary undertakings to others. The few exceptions include Pope Gregory I the Great (590–604) who took a leading role in the conversion of the English; Pope Gregory II (715–31) and his immediate successors who engaged actively in Boniface's mission to the Germans; and Pope Nicholas I (858–67) who sent missionaries to Khan Boris of the Bulgars. But the majority of the missionary undertakings of the early and central Middle Ages which succeeded in expanding Latin Christendom to northern and eastern Europe were initiated and carried out without much papal involvement.⁷ Meinhard's venture in Livonia initially followed the traditional structure of missionary projects at the time, as it was started on local initiative and was under the auspices of a local archbishop, in this case of Hamburg-Bremen.

⁴ LUB 1/1, nos 9 (25 September 1188), 10 (1 October 1188).

⁵ LUB 1/3, no. 11a; 'La *Collectio seguntina* et les décrétales de Clément III et de Célestin III', ed. Walther Holtzmann, *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 50 (1955), 400–453 (here 425–26); LUB 1/1, no. 11 (27 April 1193). See also Michele Maccarrone, 'I Papi e gli inizi della cristianizzazione della Livonia', in *Gli Inizi del cristianesimo in Livonia-Lettonia: Atti del Colloquio Internazionale di storia ecclesiastica in occasione dell'VIII centenario della Chiesa in Livonia (1186–1986)*, Roma 24–25 giugno 1986, ed. Michele Maccarrone (Roma, 1989), pp. 31–80 (here 43–44).

⁶ Maccarrone, 'I Papi e gli inizi della cristianizzazione', pp. 78–80 (19 April 1201). For Innocent's use of the same idea elsewhere, see Brenda Bolton, 'Daughters of Rome: All One in Christ Jesus', *Studies in Church History* 27 (1990), 101–115 (here 108–109), reprinted with original pagination in Bolton, *Innocent III: Studies on Papal Authority and Pastoral Care* (Aldershot, 1995).

⁷ See, for example, Peter Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom: Triumph and Diversity, A.D. 200–1000*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 2003); Richard E. Sullivan, 'The Papacy and Missionary Activity in the Early Middle Ages', *Mediaeval Studies* 17 (1955), 46–106; Ian Wood, 'The Mission of Augustine of Canterbury to the English', *Speculum* 69 (1994), 1–17; Ian Wood, *The Missionary Life: Saints and the Evangelisation of Europe, 400–1050* (Harlow, 2001), especially pp. 178–79; Jonathan Shepard, 'Slavs and Bulgars', in *The New Cambridge Medieval History, II: c. 700–c. 900*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 228–48 (here 241); Wilhelm Berges, 'Reform und Ostmission im 12. Jahrhundert', *Wichmann Jahrbuch* 9–10 (1955–56), 31–44, reprinted in *Heidenmission und Kreuzzugsgedanke in der deutschen Ostpolitik des Mittelalters*, ed. Helmut Beumann (Darmstadt, 1963), pp. 317–36.

However, Meinhard and his successors broke this mould as they began to forge very close ties to Rome and saw their many requests for support rewarded with authorizations, advice and proclamations of crusades in defence of the missionaries and new converts.

Honorius III and Mission among Non-Christians

By the time of the election of Pope Honorius III the efforts to conquer and Christianize the pagans in the eastern Baltic region had expanded, and missions had been established in Livonia, Estonia and Prussia as well as in Finland. Honorius continued his predecessors' support for the mission and crusades in the region, but developed papal involvement further. In late 1224 he sent William, bishop of Modena and former vice-chancellor at the Curia, as legate to the region.⁸ Although there had been frequent contact between Rome and the missionary bishops, this was the first papal legate dispatched to the eastern Baltic region. William was sent in response to petitions from the leader of the Livonian mission, Albert von Buxhövdn, bishop of Riga (d. 1229), who had asked for a legate, probably in the hope that he might persuade the Curia to elevate his see to metropolitan status.⁹ However, Honorius decided to use this opportunity to further the missionary work in the wider region: William received legatine powers not only in Livonia, but also in Prussia, Estonia, Semgallia, Sambia, Curonia and Vironia.¹⁰ It is furthermore clear from William's letter of appointment (*Cum is qui* of 31 December 1224) that the purpose of his legatine mission was not only administrative and organizational matters. William was also to strengthen and advance the ongoing missionary work in the region.¹¹ In his letter Honorius stated that he was sending William to preach the word about Jesus Christ, *ad evangelizandum in partibus illis dominum Ihesum Christum*, and the Gospel quotations used in the letter emphasized this point: in the *arenga* Honorius paraphrased Mark (16.15), reminding the letter's audience that

⁸ For William's career, see Gustav A. Donner, *Kardinal Wilhelm von Sabina: Bischof von Modena 1222–1234* (Helsinki, 1929); Jane E. Sayers, *Papal Government and England during the Pontificate of Honorius III (1216–1227)* (Cambridge, 1984), p. 26.

⁹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIX.2, p. 316. For Albert's unsuccessful requests for such an elevation, see *LUB* 1/1, no. 47 (7 November 1219); *Regesta Honorii Papae III*, ed. Pietro Pressutti, 2 vols (Roma, 1888–1905), 2, no. 4633 (23 December 1223); full text in Vatican Archives, *Registra Vaticana* 12, fol. 130. See also Ernst Pitz, *Papstreskript und Kaiserreskript im Mittelalter* (Tübingen, 1971), p. 141.

¹⁰ *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/6, no. 29 (31 December 1224); Pitz, *Papstreskript und Kaiserreskript*, p. 131. The legatine mission also covered Holstein and the islands of Öland, Bornholm, Rügen and Gotland, through which he would be travelling on his way to the eastern Baltic region. For a discussion of the place names, see Donner, *Kardinal Wilhelm von Sabina*, pp. 415–17.

¹¹ See also Pitz, *Papstreskript und Kaiserreskript*, pp. 136–42.

Christ had sent his disciples into the world to preach. Honorius also recognized the work done by the missionaries in Livonia and Prussia and credited them for the fact that the missionary fields now were 'white to harvest' (John 4.35).¹² Honorius thereby made it clear that the missionary lands were ready for William to carry out his duties, preaching and consolidating the new plantations of the faith through the erection of more churches and the appointment of more bishops.¹³

Yet Honorius did not merely offer support to ongoing missionary projects. In a break with traditional papal policy he initiated a major missionary venture. In the early spring of 1221 he issued the letter *Ne si secus* to more than forty archbishops all over Latin Europe, exhorting them to send suitable men from their provinces to Rome from where he would dispatch them to work for the conversion of non-Christians. Honorius did not specify where the missionaries would be sent, but merely referred to the lands outside 'the Lord's vineyard', that is, the lands outside the church and the Christian community. His plans may not have been finalized, but it appears that he intended to target a variety of non-Christian peoples and that he was envisioning a large-scale missionary campaign, even bigger than the projects undertaken by his early medieval predecessors. Honorius asked for between two and four men from each province, clearly hoping to convene a missionary force of a good hundred men. As part of his description of the tasks of the missionaries he paraphrased two verses from Deborah's Song of Victory in Judges (5.9–10), wishing perhaps to invoke in his audience an image of a triumphant missionary corps working to overcome ignorance and injustice.¹⁴

The grand missionary scheme – which had been due to start the following autumn – apparently came to nothing; no further reference to the plan has been found in the extant sources. Honorius did not, however, lose interest in external mission. In the summer of 1225 he endorsed a Dominican mission to Morocco. In the letter *Vineae Domini custodes* of June 1225 he entrusted the petitioners with two tasks, namely to provide pastoral care for the Christian communities in the region and to work for the conversion of non-Christians. The two friars who were to undertake this dangerous journey received permission to evangelize and convert

¹² *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/6, no. 29 (31 December 1224).

¹³ *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/6, no. 29 (31 December 1224). William received the authority to erect churches and to appoint and consecrate two or three bishops in the region in a letter of 9 January 1225 (*LUB* 1/1, no. 72). His interest in external mission is suggested by a letter of 9 January 1225: *Epistolae Saeculi XIII e Regestis Pontificum Romanorum*, ed. Carl Rodenberg, MGH *Epistolae*, 3 vols (Berlin, 1883–94), 1, no. 264; see also Pitz, *Papstreskript und Kaiserreskript*, p. 132. For William's enthusiasm for his tasks, see Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIX.3, pp. 316–20, XXIX.7, p. 324.

¹⁴ *Regesta Honorii Papae III*, no. 3209 (undated). Pressutti tentatively offers the date 25 March 1221; on the basis of the entry in the papal registers the editors of *Diplomatarium Danicum* suggest February or March 1221: *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, no. 192.

infidels.¹⁵ A few months later Honorius reissued *Vineae Domini custodes* but this time he exhorted both Dominicans and Franciscans to work in northern Africa.¹⁶ The small changes he made to the wording of the letter suggest that this was not done in response to requests from the friars, but that it was an idea originating in the Curia. Some time afterwards Honorius ordered Archbishop Rodrigo of Toledo to send more Dominican and Franciscan friars to northern Africa to convert the infidels and support the Christians there.¹⁷ The pope thus took an active role in the organization of a mission by the mendicants to northern Africa, and he seems to have envisioned the two orders working side by side in a shared missionary field.

These initiatives and measures show that Honorius saw mission among pagans and Muslims as an important part of his papal duties. A closer analysis of some of his key letters concerning mission among non-Christians may throw further light on this, as the language employed and the images chosen may give an insight into how he perceived external mission. This of course raises the issue to what extent Honorius personally was involved in the composition of the letters.¹⁸

The output of the papal chancery may be divided into curial letters and common letters although this distinction was not yet completely clear-cut in the thirteenth century, as Patrick Zutshi points out.¹⁹ Curial letters were typically drafted by a notary, but as they were issued on the initiative of the Curia the papal involvement in their composition is likely to have been high. Common letters were written in reply to petitions presented to the Curia and may be subdivided into *littere legende*, which were read to the pope during their processing at the Curia, and *littere dande*, which were not. The latter category was dealt with by the vice-chancellor or the notaries and included routine petitions such as those for letters of justice.²⁰ For the former category, the petition was read to the pope. If approved, a notary would

¹⁵ *La Documentación pontificia de Honorio III (1216–1227)*, ed. Demetrio Mansilla, Monumenta Hispaniae Vaticana. Sección: Registros II (Roma, 1965), no. 562 (10 June 1225). Honorius used the verb *evangelizare* to signify preaching among both non-Christians and Christians, as, for instance, in letters of 6 May 1221 and 31 December 1224: *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, no. 194, 1/6, no. 29.

¹⁶ *La Documentación pontificia de Honorius III*, no. 579 (7 October 1225).

¹⁷ The letter is lost, but its existence can be surmised from a letter of 20 February 1226: *La Documentación pontificia de Honorio III*, no. 595.

¹⁸ The question of the involvement of the popes in the production of their letters has been much discussed (especially with regard to Innocent III), but without producing a decisive answer: Patrick Zutshi, 'The Personal Role of the Pope in the Production of Papal Letters in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries', in *Vom Nutzen des Schreibens: Soziales Gedächtnis, Herrschaft und Besitz im Mittelalter*, ed. Walter Pohl and Paul Herold (Wien, 2002), pp. 225–36 (here 230 n. 42).

¹⁹ Zutshi, 'The Personal Role of the Pope', p. 225.

²⁰ Zutshi, 'The Personal Role of the Pope', p. 226. From Honorius III's pontificate onwards it became common not to appoint chancellors but to use vice-chancellors instead, a practice that had also been seen occasionally in the twelfth century. Honorius thus did not keep on Innocent's chancellor, Thomas of Capua, but in his place appointed Rainerius as

prepare a draft for the reply, sometimes working according to papal instructions. The letter was then engrossed. In the thirteenth century letters may in some cases have been read to the pope in all three stages (petition, draft and engrossment) of their production.²¹

Luckily an account by Thomas of Cantimpré of Honorius's letter *Gratiarum omnium* of 21 January 1217 to St Dominic and his followers, which recently has been analysed by Patrick Zutshi, offers us a rare chance for a closer look at Honorius's role in the issue of his letters. It exemplifies how Honorius occasionally gave instructions to the notary drafting his letters and shows how he, who had been acting chancellor in the mid-1190s,²² at times took a detailed interest in the wording of his letters: in this case he discussed with the notary which epithet to use to denote the friars.²³

That there indeed was a papal input is furthermore suggested by the fact that Honorius's letters generally differed from those of his predecessor, Innocent III, on a number of stylistic points.²⁴ Whereas Innocent typically filled his letters with a great number of biblical references,²⁵ the letters issued during Honorius's pontificate contained fewer of these and were generally less elaborate texts. The *arengae* of Honorius's letters tended to be shorter than those of Innocent; indeed, Honorius's letters were often quite short. He obviously had access to copies of many of Innocent's letters and often consulted them before issuing letters on related matters. In some cases he copied Innocent's letters partly or in full, but even then it is clear that he carefully considered which elements to reproduce, as will be seen below.

The letters used in this analysis did not deal with minor routine issues; they granted indulgences, authorized crusades, supported new missions or, in the case of *Ne si secus*, which appears to have been a curial letter, contained plans for a major missionary initiative. Being letters of importance, they would have been read to

vice-chancellor: Sayers, *Papal Government and England*, pp. 24–25; Ian S. Robinson, *The Papacy 1073–1198: Continuity and Innovation* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 95–97.

²¹ Zutshi, 'The Personal Role of the Pope', pp. 226, 229, with examples from the pontificates of Innocent III and Innocent IV.

²² Sayers, *Papal Government and England*, p. 15.

²³ The account and its validity are analysed in Zutshi, 'The Personal Role of the Pope', pp. 231–2. See also Patrick Zutshi, 'Pope Honorius III's *Gratiarum Omnium* and the Beginnings of the Dominican Order', in *Omnia disce: Medieval Studies in Memory of Leonard Boyle, O.P.*, ed. Anne J. Duggan, Joan Greatrex and Brenda Bolton (Aldershot, 2005), pp. 199–210.

²⁴ This point is also remarked upon by Marie-Humbert Vicaire, *Saint Dominic and his Times* (London, 1964), p. 418. For the continuity among the notaries, see Sayers, *Papal Government and England*, pp. 30–31.

²⁵ See, for example, Christopher R. Cheney, 'The Letters of Pope Innocent III', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 35 (1952–53), 23–43, reprinted in Cheney, *Medieval Texts and Studies* (Oxford, 1973), pp. 16–38 (here 29–31).

Honorius at one or more stages of their production. He may have given his notaries a framework for the draft or suggested images and phrases; he may even have composed part of the text himself.²⁶ He could have had terms or references which did not express his views erased. We may therefore assume that their imagery and the course of action they prescribed convey his policies and general sentiments on the matter. Bearing in mind the reservations mentioned above, in this analysis 'Honorius' is therefore used to denote the pope himself and/or his officials in the chancery who may have composed the letters in his name.

Honorius used a variety of Gospel references to express his views on external mission. Among his favourite ones were the parable of the workers in the vineyard from Matthew 20.1–16 and the image of the fields ready for harvest from John 4.35–38. He also frequently used the words of Christ, reported by Matthew (9.36–38) and Luke (10.2), that 'the harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few'. These images were perhaps an obvious choice in recruiting or instructing new missionaries, and Honorius employed them in letters concerning both external mission and internal mission, that is, preaching among Christians weak in faith; Innocent III had also done so.²⁷ The image of the Lord's vineyard, with its varying biblical contexts, was also a favourite when the chroniclers narrating the stories of the missionary work in the Baltic region described these new plantations of the faith.²⁸ Using the references to Matthew, John and Luke Honorius created

²⁶ See also Vicaire, *Saint Dominic and his Times*, p. 418; Sayers, *Papal Government and England*, pp. 28–29.

²⁷ See, for example, *Regesta Honorii Papae III*, nos 2267 (22 November 1219), 2270 (25 November 1219); *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, nos 192 (February × March 1221), 194 (6 May 1221), 1/6, no. 29 (31 December 1224); *La Documentación pontificia de Honorius III*, nos 562 (10 June 1225), 579 (7 October 1225), 595 (20 February 1226). For Innocent III, see *Fontes Historiae Latviae Medii Aevi*, ed. Arveds Švābe, 2 vols (Riga, 1937–40), 1, no. 31; Maccarrone, 'I Papi e gli inizi della cristianizzazione', pp. 78–80 (19 April 1201); *Die Register Innocenz' III.*, ed. Othmar Hageneder et al. (Graz, 1964–), 7, no. 139 (12 October 1204), 2, no. 1 (25 March 1199). For Innocent III's use of the image of the vineyard, also from other biblical sources including Song of Solomon 2.15, Jeremiah 12.10 and Isaiah 5, see Alberto Melloni, 'Vineam Domini – 10 April 1213: New Efforts and Traditional Topoi – Summoning Lateran IV', in *Pope Innocent III and his World*, ed. John C. Moore (Aldershot, 1999), pp. 63–71; Beverley Mayne Kienzle, *Cistercians, Heresy and Crusade in Occitania, 1145–1229: Preaching in the Lord's Vineyard* (York, 2001), pp. 8–9, 138 and 146–47; and Brenda Bolton, 'Philip Augustus and John: Two Sons in Innocent III's Vineyard?', in *The Church and Sovereignty c. 590–1918: Essays in Honour of Michael Wilks*, ed. Diana Wood (Oxford, 1991), pp. 113–34, reprinted with original pagination in Bolton, *Innocent III: Studies on Papal Authority and Pastoral Care* (Aldershot, 1995).

²⁸ See Linda Kaljundi, 'Waiting for the Barbarians: The Imagery, Dynamics and Functions of the Other in Northern German Missionary Chronicles, 11th – Early 13th Centuries. The *Gestae Hamaburgensis Ecclesiae Pontificum* of Adam of Bremen, *Chronica Slavorum* of Helmold of Bosau, *Chronica Slavorum* of Arnold of Lübeck, and *Chronicon Livoniae* of Henry of Livonia' (unpublished MA thesis, University of Tartu, 2005).

an image of the Lord's vineyard surrounded by an arid and infertile wilderness (Lat. *solitudo*) which was to be cultivated by the plough of preaching; these lands would then become part of the lush and fertile vineyard of the Lord. A potentially abundant harvest and a heavenly reward awaited the workers (or missionaries), of whom there were, however, too few.²⁹

When in 1221 Honorius launched his new missionary campaign with the letter *Ne si secus*, he showed his frustration with the lack of missionary involvement in the religious communities. He stated that 'many of those who through God's mercy are suited [for missionary work] lie hidden within the church'; he went on to say that many were preoccupied with peaceful contemplation and had not cared to work for the cultivation of the Lord's vineyard.³⁰ Using the image of Rachel and Leah (Genesis 29), Honorius called on the archbishops to awaken their men from the embrace of 'the barren Rachel' and exhort them to join Leah. The two sisters had long been used to illustrate the dilemma of a life in introvert contemplation (represented by the infertile Rachel) versus a life of extrovert action (represented by the fertile Leah) which faced members of the religious communities.³¹ The words chosen for this section also have resonances of Exodus 5.17 which reads: 'But he replied, "You are lazy, bone lazy! That is why you keep on about going to offer sacrifice to the Lord"',³² and if this quotation was deliberately employed, it served to emphasize the letter's strong rebuke of the general lack of missionary zeal. By stating that many potential missionaries had not shown the care to take up this task and work for the cultivation of the Lord's vineyard, Honorius implied that they had failed in their duties.

That he himself considered it an obligation and indeed a papal responsibility to work actively for the expansion of the faith is suggested in the *arenga* of *Ne si secus*, where he wrote that the Lord's vineyard was in his care, and that he had to send workers to the surrounding empty and desolate lands to cultivate them and to plant the vine of the faith; if he did not do so, he could rightly be blamed for

²⁹ See, for instance, *Ne si secus* (February × March 1221): *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, no. 192, and *Cum is qui* (31 December 1224): *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/6, no. 29, as well as the letters of 10 June 1225 and 7 October 1225: *La Documentación pontificia de Honorio III*, nos 562 and 579.

³⁰ *verum cum multi per dei gratiam ad hoc opus idonei latent intra ecclesiam ...: Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, no. 192 (February × March 1221); *Regesta Honorii Papae III*, nos 2005 and 3209.

³¹ For the varying use of this motif since Origen (c. 185–c. 254), see Giles Constable, *Three Studies in Medieval Religious and Social Thought: The Interpretation of Mary and Martha – The Ideal of the Imitation of Christ – The Orders of Society* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 3–141.

³² English translations of the Bible are taken from *The Revised English Bible* (1990). The Vulgate reads: *qui ait vacatis otio et idcirco dicitis eamus et sacrificemus Domino* (*Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, ed. Robert Weber et al., 2 vols [Stuttgart, 1969], 1: 82). Honorius's letter reads: *otio contemplationis uacantes* (*Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, no. 192 [February × March 1221]).

sluggishness or sloth (*de torpore seu desidia reprehendi*).³³ In his letters *Vineae domini custodes* of June and October 1225, concerning the mendicants' mission in northern Africa, Honorius described himself as the guardian and cultivator of the Lord's vineyard, and again stated that in this capacity it was necessary that he send out workers to cultivate the land.³⁴

This sense of papal duty may have been supplemented by a wish to emulate Christ, as suggested by *Cum is qui* of December 1224 in which William of Modena was appointed as legate to the eastern Baltic region. Using Mark 16.15, Honorius wrote that by sending out missionaries he was learning from the example of Christ and that he was following in the footsteps of Christ who had sent out his disciples to preach the Gospel to every creature.³⁵

Entertaining the view that it was a papal duty to work actively for the expansion of the Christian faith, Honorius gave the task a higher priority than his predecessors had done. He thereby followed the lead of Bernard of Clairvaux who in his *De consideratione* unsuccessfully had exhorted Pope Eugenius III to work actively for the conversion of non-Christians.³⁶

Honorius III and the Workers in the Lord's Vineyard: The Cistercians and the Friars

It was of course not possible for Honorius to undertake any missionary work himself; he had to delegate. He made this point when in his letter announcing the appointment of William as legate he wrote that he had to use 'the strategy of Jethro'.³⁷ This refers to Exodus 18.18–21, which reads:

The task is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone. Now listen to me; take my advice and God be with you. It is for you to be the people's representative before God, and bring their disputes to him, to instruct them in the statutes and laws, and teach them how they must behave and what they must do. But you should search for capable, god-fearing men among all the people, honest and incorruptible men, and appoint them over the people as officers ...³⁸

³³ *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, no. 192 (February × March 1221).

³⁴ *La Documentación pontificia de Honorio III*, nos 562 (10 June 1225) and 579 (7 October 1225).

³⁵ *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/6, no. 29 (31 December 1224).

³⁶ Bernard of Clairvaux, 'De Consideratione ad Eugenium papam', in *S. Bernardi Opera*, ed. J. Leclercq, C.H. Talbot and H.M. Rochais, 8 vols. (Rome, 1957–77), 3: 433–34.

³⁷ *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/6, no. 29 (31 December 1224): *nec per nos ipsos possimus singulis negotiis imminere. inter eos quos in partem sollicitudinis euocauimus / onera quasi Gethro usi consilio diuidamus.*

³⁸ Vulgate (18.18): ... *ultra vires tuas est negotium solus illud non poteris sustinere* (18.19) *sed audi verba mea atque consilia et erit Deus tecum esto tu populo in his quae ad*

So while responsibility rested with Honorius, he was to employ aides such as William of Modena to preach and oversee the extension of the ecclesiastical organization. But who else did Honorius envision as his workers in the missionary fields and how did he perceive their role?

When in 1221 Honorius published his plans for a new missionary initiative, he intended the Cistercians to make up the core of his missionary corps. He asked each archbishop to send 'four men of sincere faith and well-tested learning, or three or at least two from any religious house or order and in particular from the Cistercian Order'.³⁹ The Cistercians had long collaborated with the papacy on a series of issues, having acted as papally commissioned preachers and legates. They had also involved themselves in external mission, including the various ventures in the eastern Baltic region. Thus it was Polish Cistercians who had started the mission in Prussia in the early thirteenth century; the second missionary bishop in Livonia, Berthold, was a Cistercian; and Bishop Albert of Riga and the Danish King Valdemar II (1202–41) had both recruited Cistercians for their Baltic missionary projects.⁴⁰ The statutes from the general chapters of the Cistercian Order show, however, that in the thirteenth century there was growing concern within the Order about its involvement in these activities, which may go some way to explain why Honorius's plans for a missionary push did not come to fruition.⁴¹

The biblical references employed in the papal letters on mission show that the missionaries were seen as the new apostles. This was not new; indeed, it was a commonplace to call missionaries apostles.⁴² Honorius employed this imagery extensively and elaborately, testifying to his belief in its validity. By using

Deum pertinent ut referas quae dicuntur ad eum (18.20) ostendasque populo caerimonias et ritum colendi viamque per quam ingredi debeant et opus quod facere (18.21) provide autem de omni plebe viros potentes et timentes Deum in quibus sit veritas et qui oderint avaritiam et constitute ex eis tribunos et centuriones et quinquagenarios et decanos ... (Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem, 1: 102).

³⁹ *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, no. 192 (February × March 1221): *quatuor uiros opinionis sincere ac litterature probate uel tres seu saltem duos cuiuscumque religionis uel ordinis et Cisterciensis presertim.*

⁴⁰ See, for example, Ludwig Schmugge, 'Zisterzienser, Kreuzzug und Heidenkrieg', in *Die Zisterzienser. Ordensleben zwischen Ideal und Wirklichkeit* (Köln, 1980), pp. 57–68; Bernhart Jähmig, 'Zisterzienser und Ritterorden zwischen geistlicher und weltlicher Macht in Livland und Preußen zu Beginn der Missionszeit', in *Die Ritterorden zwischen geistlicher und weltlicher Macht in Mittelalter*, ed. Zenon Hubert Nowak (Toruń, 1990), pp. 71–86. See also *PUB* 1/1, no. 4 (26 October 1206); *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, nos 166–67 (both 19 March 1220); *LUB* 1/1, no. 51 (18 April 1220); *Regesta Honorii Papae III*, 1, no. 2399 (18 April 1220).

⁴¹ See *Statuta capitulorum generalium Ordinis Cisterciensis*, ed. Joseph-Marie Canivez, 3 vols (Louvain, 1933), 1, sub anno 1199 (p. 246, ch. 71) and sub anno 1209 (p. 364, ch. 35); Maccarrone, 'I Papi e gli inizi della cristianizzazione', pp. 57–60.

⁴² For Innocent III's use of this image, see Michele Maccarrone, *Studi su Innocenzo III* (Padova, 1972), p. 268.

quotations from the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles and the letters traditionally attributed to St Paul, he made a parallel between the lives of the apostles and those of the missionaries. He also exhorted the missionaries to emulate the apostles. Rephrasing Ephesians (2.19), in *Ne si secus* of 1221 he thus encouraged the missionaries responding to his appeal to act 'just as the fellow citizens of the apostles and of the household of God'.⁴³ He also urged Archbishop Rodrigo of Toledo to exhort the missionaries in northern Africa to 'follow the guidance of the apostles' in order to win souls for Christ.⁴⁴

When in 1220 Honorius wrote to Vesselin, bishop of Reval (mod. Tallinn, Estonia), he praised him because he was 'propagating the name of Christ to the pagans in Estonia so that they through [his] preaching ministry would come to know the truth because of Him who does not wish anyone to perish'.⁴⁵ Honorius here used a quote from the First Epistle to Timothy (2.4) in which St Paul spoke of God 'whose will it is that all should find salvation and come to know the truth'; but the wider context of the quotation suggests that Honorius indeed saw the missionaries as fulfilling the same role as the apostles once had done. In the First Epistle to Timothy (2.3–7) St Paul wrote:

Such prayer is right, and approved by God our Saviour, whose will it is that all should find salvation and come to know the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and man, Christ Jesus, himself man, who sacrificed himself to win freedom for all mankind, revealing God's purpose at God's good time; of this I was appointed herald and apostle (this is no lie, it is the truth), to instruct the Gentiles in the true faith.⁴⁶

St Paul had been a preacher and apostle in order to carry out God's wish that all men should come to the faith; Honorius's choice of quotation suggests that he perceived Vesselin as performing the same task. These ideas about the role of

⁴³ Honorius used the phrase '*tamquam ciues apostolorum et domestici dei*': *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, no. 192 (February × March 1221); Ephesians 2.19 has the phrase '*cives sanctorum et domestici Dei*'.

⁴⁴ *La Documentación pontificia de Honorio III*, no. 595 (20 February 1226).

⁴⁵ *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, no. 166 (19 March 1220): *Cum zelo caritatis portas coram paganis Estonie nomen Christi / ut faciente illo qui neminem uult perire / per tue predicationis ministerium ad agnitionem ueniant ueritatis*. Honorius used this image in other letters, including another letter of that date, *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, no. 167, and in a letter of 15 June 1218, *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, no. 142.

⁴⁶ Vulgate (2.3): *hoc enim bonum est et acceptum coram salutari nostro Deo* (2.4) *qui omnes homines uult saluos fieri et ad agnitionem ueritatis uenire* (2.5) *unus enim Deus unus et mediator Dei et hominum homo Christus Iesus* (2.6) *qui dedit redemptionem semet ipsum pro omnibus testimonium temporibus suis* (2.7) *quo positus sum ego praedicator et apostolus ueritatem dico non mentior doctor gentium in fide et ueritate* (*Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, 2: 1832).

the missionaries have resonances to Honorius's perception of his own role. As mentioned above, Honorius saw himself as following in the footsteps of Christ by sending out men to preach the Gospel; so while he emulated Christ, the men he dispatched were to imitate the apostles.

The ideal of emulating Christ and the apostolic life had found strong proponents in the two new mendicant orders, the Dominicans and the Franciscans, who now presented themselves as Honorius's missionary collaborators. Although there were several differences between the two, they shared the ideal of apostolic poverty and evangelization and wished to work both in internal and external mission.

Honorius had close links to both orders and their founders. While Innocent III had given Francis's Order only a verbal, conditional and temporary approval, Honorius – who had supported Francis before his election as pope – formally approved the Order and its rule.⁴⁷ Honorius also strongly endorsed the Dominicans. He approved the Order and its programme in privileges and bulls issued between 1216 and 1219, and he continued to support Dominic's work and the expansion of his Order through a series of bulls of recommendation for the Order. Marie-Humbert Vicaire has shown how the bulls fall into five different categories, distinguished by the opening words of their *arengae*.⁴⁸ One category, mainly issued in the spring of 1221, began with the words *Cum qui recipit prophetam*. The recommendation bulls of this category exemplify how Honorius by then had come to see the Dominicans as central to his plans for strengthening the Church through pastoral reform, preaching and evangelizing within Christendom.⁴⁹ He here referred to the friars as preachers who were very necessary or irreplaceable for the Church. Furthermore, the opening line of the letters – 'Whoever receives a prophet because he is a prophet will be given a prophet's reward' – was borrowed from Matthew's rendering of the speech given by Christ when he sent out his disciples to preach and promised a reward to those who received his disciples well (Matt. 10.1–42).⁵⁰ This recounts that:

⁴⁷ James M. Powell, 'The Papacy and the Early Franciscans', *Franciscan Studies* 36 (1976), 248–62 (here 255–59).

⁴⁸ See Vicaire, *Saint Dominic and his Times*, pp. 418–25.

⁴⁹ While some recommendation bulls described the task of the Dominicans as universal evangelization, others emphasized the friars' usefulness in the fight against the heretics, a fight in which Dominic himself had participated successfully, see Vicaire, *Saint Dominic and his Times*, p. 425, and, for example, the letter of 18 January 1221: *Bullarium Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum*, ed. Thomas Ripoll and Antonio Bremond, 8 vols (Roma, 1729–40), 1, no. 18. For the interplay between Honorius's support for the Dominicans and his reworking of the ideas about the reform of preaching laid down in Canon 10 of the Fourth Lateran Council, see James M. Powell, 'Pastor Bonus: Some Evidence of Honorius III's Use of the Sermons of Pope Innocent III', *Speculum* 52 (1977), 522–37 (here 530–31) and Vicaire, *Saint Dominic and his Times*, pp. 424–25.

⁵⁰ Vicaire (*Saint Dominic and his Times*, p. 420) has a list of the known letters entitled *Cum qui recipit prophetam*; one letter (6 May 1221) was issued to the Danish king: *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, no. 194. Honorius here wrote: *Cum qui recipit prophetam*

These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: 'Do not take the road to gentile lands, and do not enter any Samaritan town; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go proclaim the message: "The kingdom of heaven is upon you." Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, drive out demons. You received without cost; give without charge. Take no gold, silver, or copper in your belts, no pack for the road, no second coat, no sandals, no stick; the worker deserves his keep.' (Matt. 10.5–10)⁵¹

In Matthew's account Christ concluded his speech with these words:

'To receive you is to receive me, and to receive me is to receive the One who sent me. Whoever receives a prophet because he is a prophet will be given a prophet's reward, and whoever receives a good man because he is a good man will be given a good man's reward. Truly I tell you: anyone who gives so much as a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is a disciple of mine, will certainly not go unrewarded.' (Matt. 10.40–42)⁵²

The use of this Gospel quotation served to emphasize to the recipients of the recommendatory bulls that they were to welcome the friars and that their assistance would earn them a heavenly reward.⁵³ By choosing these words from Matthew Honorius in effect made a parallel between the friars and the disciples. This shows that he acknowledged the friars' ideals and believed they were worthy and capable of fulfilling them. The use of Matthew's words in this situation also suggests that

in nomine prophete mercedem prophete accipiat; Matthew 10.41 reads in the Vulgate: *qui recipit prophetam in nomine prophetae mercedem prophetae accipiet* (*Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, 2: 1541).

⁵¹ Vulgate (10.5): *Hos duodecim misit Iesus praecipiens eis et dicens in viam gentium ne abieritis et in civitates Samaritanorum ne intraveritis* (10.6) *sed potius ite ad oves quae perierunt domus Israhel* (10.7) *Euntes autem praedicate dicentes quia adpropinquavit regnum caelorum* (10.8) *infirmos curate mortuos suscite leprosos mundate daemons eicite gratis accepistis gratis date* (10.9) *nolite possidere aurum neque argentum neque pecuniam in zonis vestris* (10.10) *non peram in via neque duas tunicas neque calciamenta neque virgam dignus enim est operarius cibo suo* (*Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, 2: 1539).

⁵² Vulgate (10.40): *Qui recipit vos me recipit et qui me recipit recipit eum qui me misit* (10.41) *qui recipit prophetam in nomine prophetae mercedem prophetae accipiet et qui recipit iustum in nomine iusti mercedem iusti accipiet* (10.42) *Et quicumque potum dederit uni ex minimis istis calicem aquae frigidae tantum in nomine discipuli amen dico vobis non perdet mercedem suam* (*Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, 2: 1541).

⁵³ Indeed, the letter to the Danish king states: *Cum qui recipit prophetam in nomine prophete mercedem prophete accipiat uiros predicatorum ecclesie sancta perneccessarios tue libenter magnitudini commendamus ut ex hoc mercedem tibi compares incomparabilem apud deum*: *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, no. 194 (6 May 1221).

the pope perceived a parallel between his relation to the friars and Christ's relation to his disciples.

Shortly after his formal approval of the Order, Honorius thus came to see the Dominicans as important helpers in the realization of his visions for the Church. Having endorsed their internal missionary work, their evangelizing among Christians and heretics, it is not surprising that he soon also became convinced of their usefulness in external mission.⁵⁴ The Franciscans, with their apostolic zeal and nascent involvement in mission among Muslims, would make equally valuable partners.⁵⁵ By the middle of the 1220s Honorius had decided to co-operate with the friars on conversion of non-Christians as evidenced by the missions to northern Africa. Honorius's failure to recruit members of the 'old' religious orders for his plans of 1221 for a large-scale missionary project may have played a part in the formation of this alliance, but the shared ideas and the relations (often mediated through Cardinal Ugolino of Ostia) between Honorius and Dominic and Francis must have been of primary importance.⁵⁶

Honorius III and the New Converts

Placing such weight on the expansion of the Church and the Christian faith, Honorius worked to ensure that the new converts remained within the Church. Apostasy had been a frequent and recurrent problem for the various missions in the eastern Baltic lands. In the early thirteenth century Rome received several letters regarding this matter from the various powers involved in the missionary work there. These often included complaints about the behaviour of other Christian powers working in the region, stating that they imposed exorbitant dues or services on the new converts, thereby causing them to apostatize. Such accusations of abuse of the new converts may occasionally have been exaggerated and in the early thirteenth century were certainly often used by those involved in the conquest and conversion of the Baltic lands to defame their rivals in the ongoing competition for land and power. Having no means of acquiring independent and unbiased information prior to the dispatch of William as legate, the Curia took them seriously. Both Innocent III and Honorius III were responsive to the reports that the conquest and conversion of large parts of the eastern Baltic region had led to economic and social exploitation of the native peoples and they tried to curb the territorial and financial ambitions

⁵⁴ The task as crusade propagandists was, however, only given to the Dominicans by Pope Gregory IX (1227–41): Christoph T. Maier, *Preaching the Crusades. Mendicant Friars and the Cross in the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1994).

⁵⁵ James D. Ryan, 'To Baptize Khans or to Convert Peoples? Missionary Aims in Central Asia in the Fourteenth Century', in *Christianizing Peoples and Converting Individuals*, ed. Guyda Armstrong and Ian N. Wood (Turnhout, 2000), pp. 247–57 (here 248–49).

⁵⁶ See, for example, Vicaire, *Saint Dominic and his Times*, pp. 192–95.

of the Western incomers. Honorius feared that such harsh treatment might not only cause apostasy, but also deter potential converts from coming to the faith. In 1218 he accordingly issued a letter to crusaders going to Prussia, exhorting them to undertake the journey in order to work for the common good of the Church rather than for their own benefit. Rephrasing the words of Philippians 2.21, he implored the crusaders to 'seek not their own, but the things which are Jesus Christ's'.⁵⁷

Honorius also showed his concern over the reported abuse of the newly Christianized peoples in letters addressed to the new converts themselves. When in December 1224 and January 1225 the Curia was preparing for William's legatine mission, Honorius issued to the new converts a guarantee of their freedom.⁵⁸ Drawing on St Paul's Epistle to the Romans (especially 8.20–21 and 9.22–23) he stated that:

Since you thus have been called to the freedom of the sons of God, reborn through water and the Holy Spirit, and since where God's spirit is there ought to be freedom, and since it is unworthy that you as converts should suffer worse conditions than when you were pagans [...] we establish that you [...] shall be under our protection and that of St Peter, living free and subject to nobody but Christ.⁵⁹

Honorius thus emphasized that the new converts had been liberated from the bondage of sin through their conversion and had been reborn in the freedom of Christ and, furthermore, that he wished this spiritual freedom to become manifest also in the temporal world. New converts were not to be subjected to excessive dues and services or slavery.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, no. 139 (16 May 1218): *quatinus non que uestra sunt sed que Christi querentes*. See also *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, nos 149 (12 May 1219), 169 (19 April 1220). Innocent III had used this passage from Philippians in 1212 when reprimanding the dukes of Poland and Pomerania for their treatment of the new converts in Prussia: *PUB* 1/1, no. 7. The following year he reproached Bishop Albert of Riga for his conduct towards the new converts: *LUB* 1/1, no. 28 (11 October 1213). The Livs themselves complained of their treatment at the hands of Albert and his men: Henry of Livonia, ch. X.1, pp. 44–6.

⁵⁸ *LUB* 1/1, no. 71 (3 January 1225). See also *PUB* 1/1, no. 37 (8 May 1220). For a discussion of the letter of 1225, see also Pitz, *Papstreskript und Kaiserreskript*, pp. 132–33.

⁵⁹ *LUB* 1/1, no. 71 (3 January 1225): *Cum igitur vocati sitis in libertatem filiorum Dei, ex aqua et spiritu sancto renati, et ubi spiritus Dei est, debeat esse libertas, ac valde indignum existeret, ut deterioris conditionis haberemini conversi ad fidem, quam cum infideles essetis [...] personas vestras [...] sub beati Petri et nostra protectione sunt, statuentes, ut in libertate vestra manentes nulli alii sitis quam soli Christo*. The letter is translated in full in Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades*, p. 178.

⁶⁰ See especially the letters of *LUB* 1/1, no. 71 (3 January 1225); *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, no. 169 (19 April 1220); *PUB* 1/1, no. 37 (8 May 1220).

Honorius III and his Motivation for the Mission among Non-Christians

Many of Honorius's contemporaries believed that the time had come for missionary work both inside and outside Christendom. These included Jacques de Vitry (d. 1240), bishop of Acre (1216–28) and participant in the Fifth Crusade in Egypt in 1218–21. He was himself engaged in mission among Muslims and wrote several letters from the East in which he expressed his belief in the conversion of non-Christians and advocated mission among Muslims and pagans.⁶¹ He also made this point when writing to Honorius.⁶² The pope, too, believed that the time was ripe for mission. He illustrated this point in various ways, including his use of the image from the Gospel of John (4.35) that the fields were 'white to harvest' which he used concerning both internal and external mission.⁶³ In a letter of April 1220 to King Valdemar II of Denmark he explicitly wrote that there was hope 'right now' for the conversion of many different peoples as Saracens and pagans were being called to come to the faith in accordance with the word of the Gospel.⁶⁴ It is possible that this sentiment was influenced by apocalyptic ideas. In *Ne si secus* Honorius wrote of the urgency to send out missionaries, using the idea of 'the eleventh hour' (Matt. 20); he also used Isaiah (32.15–16), stating that 'when the Lord pours his spirit from on high, judgment shall come to dwell in the wilderness [...] and [...] the wilderness of the peoples shall become a fruitful field'.⁶⁵

Another motivation behind Honorius's strong interest in mission should perhaps be found in his wish to protect Christendom. Innocent III had often expressed the view that various internal and external problems, including the heretics in southern France, the Christians weak in faith and the Muslims, endangered the Christian community. These ideas had famously found a strong expression in his two letters of April 1213, *Quia maior*, which proclaimed the Fifth Crusade, and *Vineam domini*

⁶¹ For Jacques's missionary activities among Muslims and his reports back to Western Europe, see Benjamin Z. Kedar, *Crusade and Mission: European Approaches toward the Muslims* (Princeton, 1984), pp. 118–19 and pp. 126–29. See also Robert I. Burns, *Muslims, Christians, and Jews in the Crusader Kingdom of Valencia: Societies in Symbiosis* (Cambridge, 1984), p. 84. For Jacques's career, preaching activities and sources of inspiration, see John W. Baldwin, *Masters, Princes and Merchants: The Social Views of Peter the Chanter and his Circle*, 2 vols (Princeton, 1970), 1, pp. 38–39.

⁶² *Lettres de Jacques de Vitry (1160/1170–1240), évêque de Saint-Jean-d'Acre*, ed. Robert B.C. Huygens (Leiden, 1960), no. VII, pp. 134–53, especially p. 152. See also letter no. II, pp. 79–97, especially 87–89.

⁶³ *Regesta Honorii Papae III*, nos 2267, 2270 (22 and 25 November 1219); *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/6, no. 29 (31 December 1224).

⁶⁴ *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, no. 169 (19 April 1220).

⁶⁵ *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, no. 192 (February × March 1221): *ac sic effundente domino spiritum de excelso / in solitudine iudicium quo se cum deo et coram deo ne ab eo iudicetur / diiudicet / habitet / fiatque nationum desertum. in Chermel. in uere circumcisionis scientiam ueniendo.*

Sabaoth, which announced the Fourth Lateran Council.⁶⁶ They had led to a series of actions such as the extensive reform programme decreed at the Lateran Council which, among other things, aimed at strengthening discipline within Christendom, improving the Church's provision of pastoral care, defining and combating heresy, and organizing the Fifth Crusade in aid of the Holy Land.⁶⁷

Honorius shared the view that Christendom was under threat. In a letter of 1217 he vividly described how the Christian community was surrounded by various enemies from the east, west, south and north, using the dramatic imagery of the Old Testament.⁶⁸ Among the threats from the north was that facing the missionaries and new converts in the Baltic region. Like his predecessor he employed the image of the powerful monster Behemoth from the Book of Job (40.15–24) to describe the dangers which threatened to devour and destroy the new Christian communities.⁶⁹ When writing about the affairs in the eastern Baltic region Honorius also often wrote of the *incursus paganorum*, giving the impression that he perceived the new plantations of the faith to be under siege.⁷⁰ This fear of the multiple threats facing the Christians may have influenced Honorius's desire to promote missionary undertakings. As mentioned above, in the letters *Vineae Domini custodes* of 1225 he expressed the view, quite naturally, that he was not only the cultivator of the Lord's vineyard, but also its guardian, and that this was why he had to send out missionaries.⁷¹ His idea was perhaps that by incorporating non-Christians into the *Christianitas* they would be contained and cease being a threat. The safety and purity of the Church could be protected against the threat from non-Christians through different means: by defence and forceful retaliation in the form of crusades; by putting in place measures to separate non-Christians from Christians to avoid the risk of religious 'contamination'; or by eliminating non-Christian societies through their conversion.⁷²

⁶⁶ *Quia maior* of [19–29] April 1213: 'Urkundenbeilage', in *Studien zum Register Innocenz' III.*, ed. Georgine Tangl (Weimar, 1929), pp. 88–97; *Vineam domini Sabaoth* of 19 April 1213: *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, no. 32.

⁶⁷ *Conciliorum oecumenicorum decreta*, ed. Giuseppe Alberigo et al. (Basel, 1962).

⁶⁸ *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, no. 101 (25 January 1217).

⁶⁹ *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, no. 101; Innocent had used this image about the enemy in the Baltic region: *Die Register Innocenz' III*, 7, no. 139 (12 October 1204) and *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/4, no. 162 (31 October 1209).

⁷⁰ *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, nos. 135 (6 May 1218), 139 (16 May 1218), 149 (12 May 1219). In *Vineam domini Sabaoth* (19 April 1213) Innocent had similarly written of the incursions against the Church from its various enemies: *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, no. 32. For an analysis of this letter, see Melloni, 'Vineam Domini – 10 April 1213', especially pp. 66–71.

⁷¹ *La Documentación pontificia de Honorius III*, nos 562, 579 (10 June 1225 and 7 October 1225).

⁷² See also James M. Powell, 'The Papacy and the Muslim Frontier', in *Muslims under Latin Rule, 1100–1300*, ed. James M. Powell (Princeton, 1990), pp. 190–98; and Kenneth

Mission and Crusades in the Baltic Region

Honorius not only made innovations to papal policy by attempting to instigate mission among non-Christians; he also changed the Curia's policy concerning the crusades, which during his pontificate were proclaimed in defence of the new Christian communities in Livonia, Estonia and Prussia. It is likely that these policy changes were related and that Honorius's policies on mission among non-Christians spilled over into his policy on the Baltic Crusades. With the higher priority given to mission among non-Christians, it became increasingly important that the pope did as much as possible to ensure that those involved in such mission and their new converts received protection through the employment of crusaders.

Honorius certainly went further in his support for the Baltic Crusades than Innocent III had done. Honorius consistently gave crusaders going to the eastern Baltic region a plenary indulgence, explicitly equated with that enjoyed by crusaders going to the aid of the Holy Land.⁷³ Innocent, in contrast, had merely given crusaders an unspecified, partial indulgence. In his first crusade encyclical, *Post miserabile* (August 1198) which proclaimed the Fourth Crusade, Innocent had composed a new indulgence formula which granted crusaders a plenary indulgence (*plena venia peccatorum*). He had subsequently used this formula in his all letters concerning crusades to the Holy Land, making only minor changes and giving it its final form in *Ad liberandam*, the decree on crusades from the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215.⁷⁴ However, he had never used this formula in his letters concerning the Baltic Crusades and had not issued a plenary indulgence for these.

Honorius did not merely 'upgrade' the indulgence granted to the crusaders campaigning in the eastern Baltic region. He also extended the services which merited an indulgence by granting indulgences to those who sent others on crusade in their place by financing their journey and to those who otherwise supported

R. Stow, 'The Church and the Jews', in *The New Cambridge Medieval History. Volume V: c. 1198–c. 1300*, ed. David Abulafia (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 204–20 (here 208–9).

⁷³ PUB 1/1, no. 15 (3 March 1217); *Codex Diplomaticus Prussicus: Urkunden-Sammlung zur ältern Geschichte Preußens aus dem königlichen Geheimen Archiv zu Königsberg nebst Regesten*, ed. Johannes Voigt et al., 6 vols (Königsberg, 1836–61), 1, no. 2 (5 May 1218); *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, no. 142 (15 June 1218). For a fuller discussion of the policies of Innocent III and Honorius III on the Baltic Crusades, see Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades*, pp. 91–113 and pp. 124–36 respectively.

⁷⁴ *Post miserabile* (15 August 1198): *Die Register Innocenz' III.*, 1, no. 336; *Graves orientalis* (31 December 1199): *Die Register Innocenz' III.*, 2, no. 258; *Nisi nobis* (4 January 1200): *Die Register Innocenz' III.*, 2, no. 259; *Utinam dominus* (10 December 1208): PL, 215: 1500–1503; *Quia maior* ([19–29] April 1213): 'Urkundenbeilage', pp. 88–97; *Ad liberandam* (30 November 1215): *Conciliorum oecumenicorum decreta*, pp. 243–47. See also Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A Short History* (London, 1987), p. 121.

the crusades financially.⁷⁵ The costs of going on crusade, such as acquiring the necessary equipment, provisions and transport, were crippling, but by encouraging financial contributions to the crusades from a wider group of Christians, Honorius hoped to alleviate these problems and enable more men to go. His general policy was thus designed to facilitate the recruitment of crusaders and the generation of resources for the crusades in defence of the missionaries and new converts in the eastern Baltic region.

The difference between the policies of Innocent III and Honorius may be exemplified by a letter from Honorius of 5 May. It granted men in various German, Polish and Pomeranian church provinces an indulgence for participation in the crusades to Prussia. It was a verbatim copy of Innocent's last letter authorizing a crusade to the Baltic region, *Alto divine* (29 December 1215), save for two changes: Honorius changed the target of the crusade from Livonia to Prussia and, crucially, replaced Innocent's indulgence formula with a new one. Where Innocent had granted his usual unspecified, partial indulgence, Honorius rewarded participants with the full crusading indulgence. This testifies to the deliberate shift made by Honorius in the indulgence policy for the Baltic Crusades. But it also illustrates that even though Honorius often copied or reused parts of the imagery and rhetoric used by Innocent in his various letters, he did not do so uncritically or without reflection.⁷⁶ He carefully chose the elements which expressed his views on the matter at hand.

Pope Honorius III has often been regarded as a fairly insignificant character in the history of the papacy of the central Middle Ages, as a 'caretaker' of Innocent III's policies and even as 'simply an echo' of his great predecessor.⁷⁷ New research has, however, revealed that he did in fact make important changes to previous papal policy on a series of matters.⁷⁸ Some of these affected the mission and crusades in the eastern Baltic region. Honorius took great interest in mission among pagans and Muslims and even tried to launch a papally controlled missionary campaign, breaking with the traditional papal reluctance to initiate such undertakings. He put to use the missionary zeal of the new mendicant orders and instigated close co-operation with these orders on mission. He dispatched a legate to further the

⁷⁵ Only once had Innocent III extended the indulgence for the Baltic Crusades beyond the crusaders themselves, namely in 1215 when those who supported the crusades financially received a reward: *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, no. 61 (29 December 1215).

⁷⁶ *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 1/5, no. 61; *Codex Diplomaticus*, 1, no. 2 (5 May 1218).

⁷⁷ For 'caretaker', see Helmut Roscher, *Papst Innocenz III. und die Kreuzzüge* (Göttingen, 1969), p. 188; for 'echo', see Horace K. Mann, *The Lives of the Popes in the Middle Ages*, 19 vols (London 1902–32), 13: 20. For a discussion of this traditional view of Honorius, see Powell, 'Pastor Bonus: Some Evidence', pp. 522–23.

⁷⁸ See, for example, the works of James M. Powell, especially his 'Pastor Bonus: Some Evidence', and more recently Rebecca Rist, 'Papal Policy and the Albigensian Crusades: Continuity or Change?', *Crusades* 2 (2003), 99–108.

mission and tried to safeguard the social and economic position of the new converts. The priority he ascribed to the conversion of non-Christians may explain why he also made a break with Innocent III's policy on the Baltic Crusades and decided to give greater endorsement to these crusades in defence of the missionaries and new converts, placing them on an equal footing with the crusades in aid of the Holy Land. These changes were all to have lasting consequences. Honorius's policies of a far more involved papal role in mission, collaboration with the friars and a higher priority given to the Baltic Crusades were to be continued by his successors.

Chapter 6

Violent Victims? Surprising Aspects of the Just War Theory in the Chronicle of Peter von Dusburg

Rasa Mažeika

Peter von Dusburg, a priest of the military monastic Teutonic Order in Prussia, completed in 1326 a Latin chronicle about the wars of the Order against the pagan Old Prussians and Lithuanians.¹ This work has been called ‘the most important monument for the older history of Prussia’,² and has won the hearts of historians with passages where the author apologizes for confusion of chronology or worries about not having all the facts.³ In the last two centuries Dusburg’s work has been widely used both as a source of presumed factual data about battles of the Baltic Crusade and as a demonstration of the ideology of the Teutonic Order. In their eagerness to mine these aspects of Peter Dusburg’s work, however, historians may have overlooked some legal aspects of his chronicle.

Traditional interpretations of Dusburg’s aims need not be denied. Human nature now and in the fourteenth century is multifaceted; there is seldom one and only one motivation for any work. On one level, Dusburg clearly sought to write a history in the classic sense of the deeds of famous men, recording the victories of the Teutonic Knights, as he tells us, so that they are memorialized for posterity.⁴ Moreover, the chronicle has many hitherto unnoticed literary elements. Dusburg

¹ Peter von Dusburg, ‘Chronicon terrae Prussiae’, ed. Max Töppen, in *SRP* 1: 3–219. On Peter and his work, see Hartmut Boockman, ‘Die Geschichtsschreibung des Deutschen Ordens. Gattungsfragen und Gebrauchssituationen’, in *Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsbewußtsein im späten Mittelalter*, ed. Hans Patze (Sigmaringen, 1987), pp. 449–54; Marzena Pollakówna, *Kronika Piotra z Dusburga* (Wrocław, 1968); Helmut Bauer, *Peter von Dusburg und die Geschichtsschreibung des Deutschen Ordens im 14. Jahrhundert in Preußen* (Berlin, 1935); Jarosław Wenta, *Studien über die Ordensgeschichtsschreibung am Beispiel Preußens* (Toruń, 2002), pp. 205–12; *Peter von Dusburg: Chronik des Preußenlandes*, ed. Klaus Scholz and Dieter Wojtecki (Darmstadt, 1984), pp. 7–20. The latter work is a reprint of the *SRP* edition, with added textual notes and a German translation. Cf. a new edition of Dusburg: *Kronika ziemi pruskiej*, ed. Jarosław Wenta and Sławomir Wyszomirski (Kraków, 2007). The citations in this essay are to the *SRP* edition, which is more widely available.

² Max Töppen, *Geschichte der Preußischen Historiographie von P. v. Dusburg bis auf K. Schütz* (Berlin, 1853), p. 15.

³ Peter von Dusburg, pp. 24, 118.

⁴ Peter von Dusburg, p. 21: *ut hujus solempnis facti memoriale posteris relinquantur*.

hints that he intends to provide readings for the meals of the ordinary Teutonic Knights: in one episode in the chronicle, the Virgin Mary appears in a dream and complains that the Order's knights have read to them 'about the deeds of kings and princes and the vanities of the world' and no sacred writings.⁵ It is not unlikely that Dusburg knew or hoped that his work would be translated into German and read at meals to the less literate knights, and this may explain his sometimes heavy-handed attempts to add amusing passages. In between accounts of battles and the glorious accomplishments of Grand Masters, he inserts anecdotes: two women contend for a handsome youth; a timorous soldier is the only one saved in a battle; pagans decide that the Teutonic Knights can live without provisions because they 'eat grass' (i.e. cabbage or sauerkraut); a pagan keeps running when his head is chopped off.⁶ These lively touches show that Dusburg is at least trying to make his work entertaining and engaging for even the ordinary brothers of the Order.

We are concerned here with the third aspect of the chronicle, that is what has been termed its ideological aim. This has attracted the attention of many scholars, notably Marzena Pollakówna, Vera Matuzova, Janusz Trupinda, Alden Jencks, and lately Jarosław Wenta and Edith Feistner.⁷ However, all these authors present Dusburg's ideology as a simple antithesis of the good Christian versus the evil pagan, and fail to account for (and in fact do not even mention) one seemingly odd aspect of Dusburg's chronicle: the sometimes favourable and even sympathetic portrayal of the Old Prussian pagans.

Dusburg writes that before the Teutonic Order came to the Baltic area, the pagans were 'obstinate in their malice' because they would not abandon their religion, but 'one thing was in them praiseworthy and much to be commended, that although they were infidels [...] they nevertheless kept peace with the neighbouring Christians'. It is only when the Devil stirs up the pagans to attack the land of Kulm (mod. Chełmno, Poland) that they become wholly evil.⁸

In the famous passage where Dusburg describes the religion and way of life of the Old Prussians, he postulates that when the Germans first encountered them

⁵ Peter von Dusburg, p. 95.

⁶ Peter von Dusburg, pp. 74, 78, 90, 107.

⁷ Pollakówna, *Kronika Piotra*, pp. 199–201; Vera Matuzova, 'Mental Frontiers: Prussians as Seen by Peter von Dusburg', in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, ed. Alan V. Murray (Aldershot, 2001), pp. 253–59; Vera Matuzova, 'Хроника земли Прусской Петра из Дусбурга в культурно-историческом контексте', *Балто-славянские исследования* for 1985 (1987), 102–18; Janusz Trupinda, *Ideologia krucjatowa w kronice Piotra z Dusburga* (Gdańsk, 1999); Alden Jencks, 'Maccabees on the Baltic: The Biblical Apologia of the Teutonic Order' (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Washington, 1989); Jarosław Wenta, 'Od tradycji ustnej do tradycji pisanej na przykładzie *Kroniki Piotra z Dusburga*', *Res Historica* 3 (1998), 73–85; Edith Feistner, 'Vom Kampf gegen das "Andere": Pruzzen, Litauer und Mongolen in lateinischen und deutschen Texten des Mittelalters', *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum* 132 (2003), 281–94.

⁸ Peter von Dusburg, p. 33.

the Old Prussians had no knowledge of God because they were too 'simple' to understand Him by natural reason and too illiterate to read holy writings, and they marvelled at natural phenomena because they had no one to explain these through book learning.⁹ In fact, Dusburg in this passage makes paganism a sort of logical result of lack of education.

Feistner, applying recently fashionable concepts of 'the other' to the *Chronicon terrae Prussiae*, adduced this passage as proof that Peter von Dusburg views the pagans as wholly evil and yet too inferior to be a distinct culture. Their religion and way of life, states Feistner, are depicted only as a perverted, distorted antithesis of Christianity.¹⁰ This theory ignores the very basic tenet of medieval and modern Christianity that error or ignorance are not in themselves sins (hence Dusburg's emphasis on the later apostasy of the Prussians to justify their enslavement). It also does not account for what Dusburg actually wrote. Feistner seems oblivious to the 'noble savage' topos so evident in Dusburg's passage to anyone who has read Tacitus. Like Tacitus in his description of the Germans, Dusburg praises what he perceives as the simpler way of life and the generosity of the people living outside the comforts of civilization. In the words of Stephen Rowell, 'As Tacitus exalted the Germans, so Peter idealises his exotic northerners', partly as a way of shaming the Teutonic Knights (whom Dusburg's Grand Master was furiously working to reform) into the ascetic virtues of an idealized past.¹¹ I would concur, but add that the picture is not wholly ideal. Dusburg does relate some historically attested customs – such as bride price and the offering of burnt sacrifices to the gods – which cannot be seen as an inversion of Christianity and are presented as outlandish and wrong. Probably these details are added as entertaining *exotica*, but even in their context the Prussians are scolded as wrong, not condemned as evil.

Feistner states that for Dusburg, even pagan virtues lead to vices: generosity to unlimited drinking, and simplicity of dress to 'neglect of hygiene', an amazingly anachronistic way to interpret Dusburg's remark that the pagans put on in the morning the apparel they took off the previous evening: only in our modern era do people wash clothing after one wearing!¹² But even if this pattern, which seems more a product of literary criticism than of Dusburg's own words, does exist, it cannot be applied to the assertions in the same passage that no one has to beg among

⁹ Peter von Dusburg, p. 53: *Prutheni noticiam dei non habuerunt. Quia simplices fuerunt, eum ratione comprehendere non potuerunt, et quia literas non habuerunt, ymmo in scripturis ipsum speculari non poterant. Mirabantur ultra modum in primitivo, quod quis absenti intencionem suam potuit per literas explicare. Et quia sic deum non cognoverunt, ideo contigit, quod errando omnem creaturam pro deo coluerunt.*

¹⁰ Feistner, 'Vom Kampf gegen das "Andere"', pp. 284–86.

¹¹ S.C. Rowell, *Lithuania Ascending: A Pagan Empire within East-Central Europe, 1295–1345* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 40.

¹² Feistner, 'Vom Kampf gegen das "Andere"', p. 284.

the Prussians, or that they do not seek soft beds or delicate food.¹³ Interestingly, Dusburg attributes the same practices of sharing wealth and avoiding luxuries to the first knights of the Teutonic Order whom he upholds as exemplars.¹⁴ These qualities are clearly virtues for him and not perversions.

Vera Matuzova is so determined to see in Dusburg's chronicle a 'black-and-white representation' of the pagans that she, too, detects disapproval in Dusburg's mention of the Prussians' lack of costly clothes. As proof Matuzova points to Article 34 of the Statutes of the Teutonic Order, which discusses the office of the *Trapier* who had charge of the Teutonic Knights' clothes and thus 'gives evidence of a very careful attitude to clothes and appearance of the Knights'.¹⁵ Perhaps so, but Dusburg's own frequent references to the lack of finery and hair shirts of the early Teutonic Knights show that he, at least, approved of simple apparel. This is not to deny that for Dusburg the pagans were an inferior group, suitable for conquest. His passage on the mores of the ancient Prussians is reminiscent of the remarks of John Nicholas, an early twentieth-century companion of missionaries to the Maori of New Zealand:

Though the savage does possess all the passions of nature, pure and unadulterated, and though he may in many instances feel stronger and more acutely than the man of civilized habits, still he is inferior to him in every other respect ... the former stands enveloped in the dark clouds of ignorance, the latter goes forth in the bright sunshine of knowledge; the former views the works of his Creator through the medium of a blind superstition, the latter through the light of reason and of truth; the one beholds Nature and is bewildered, the other clearly 'Looks through nature up to Nature's God'.¹⁶

Nevertheless, if the intended audience of Dusburg's chronicle was the ordinary Teutonic Knight or even all Christendom, as Pollakówna and Trupinda maintain, and the purpose was to glorify the Teutonic Order's wars, why not present paganism as wholly evil, rather than based on ignorance? Does not Dusburg's link between Christianity and education rather tell against the Order, which was constantly being accused of hindering peaceful missions to educate the pagans of the Baltic into Christianity?

For whom does Dusburg himself say that he wrote his chronicle? For the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, Werner von Orseln, to whom the chronicle,

¹³ Peter von Dusburg, p. 54: *Molli stratu et cibo delicato non utuntur*, and pp. 54–55: *Nullus unter eos permittitur mendicare, libere vadit egenus inter eos de domo ad domum, et sine verecundia comedit, quando placet*.

¹⁴ Peter von Dusburg, pp. 22, 66.

¹⁵ Matuzova, 'Mental Frontiers', p. 257.

¹⁶ *The Letters and Journals of Samuel Marsden*, ed. J. Elder (Dunedin, 1932), pp. 86–87, cited in *Signifying Identities: Anthropological Perspectives on Boundaries and Contested Values*, ed. Anthony P. Cohen (London, 2000), p. 47.

according to its prologue, is being presented.¹⁷ Of course the Grand Master might be interested in both the historical and literary aspects of the chronicle, although it was not Werner von Orseln but his successor who had Dusburg's chronicle translated into German so that it could be enjoyed by the ordinary Teutonic Knights.¹⁸ At the time Dusburg was writing, the Grand Master had more pressing worries than how to entertain the brethren of the Order.

In 1326, when this chronicle was finished, military monastic orders such as the Teutonic Knights were in disrepute. Criticism of the wealthy and powerful Templars and Hospitallers had waxed and waned since their founding. As Helen Nicholson points out, the deaths of members of these orders in battle against the pagans (which the orders themselves regarded as martyrdom) had never become grounds for the ultimate accolade of holiness, popular or official proclamation of sainthood.¹⁹ With the fall of Acre (mod. 'Akko, Israel) to the Muslims in 1291, however, long-term resentments and jealousies found an acceptable outlet in the widespread condemnation of military orders as no longer fit to perform their original mission of defence of the Holy Land.²⁰

In this atmosphere, the Order of the Templars (upon which the original Rule of the Teutonic Order was based) was abolished at the insistence of King Philip IV of France by Pope Clement V in 1308, its Grand Master burned at the stake.²¹ Pope Clement's successor, John XXII, may not have taken such radical measures, but an order to his legate in Iberia to investigate the revenues of three small Iberian monastic orders and 'above all' of the Hospitallers, and to force these orders to send an appropriate number of armed knights to 'the Saracen frontier' seems to indicate suspicions that these orders were selfishly profiting by donations the faithful had made to support war in the Holy Land.²²

The Teutonic Order had fled the Holy Land after the fall of Acre, establishing its headquarters in Venice, which was at least a traditional port of departure for crusades to Palestine. But in 1309, the headquarters and Grand Master of the

¹⁷ Peter von Dusburg, p. 21: *bella, que per nos et antecessores nostros ordinis nostri fratres victoriose gesta sunt, conscripsi et in hunc librum redegi, quem discrete providencie vestre mitto.*

¹⁸ Ernst Strehle, introduction to 'Kronike von Pruzinlant', in *SRP* 1: 292.

¹⁹ Helen Nicholson, *Templars, Hospitallers and Teutonic Knights: Images of the Military Orders, 1128–1291* (Leicester, 1993), p. 123.

²⁰ Alan Forey, 'The Military Orders in the Crusading Proposals of the Late-Thirteenth and Early-Fourteenth Centuries', *Traditio* 36 (1980), 317–45 (here 317–32), repr. in Forey, *Military Orders and Crusades* (Aldershot, 1994).

²¹ Malcolm Barber, 'The Trial of the Templars Revisited', in *The Military Orders, Volume 2: Welfare and Warfare*, ed. Helen Nicholson (Aldershot, 1998), pp. 329–42.

²² *Jean XXII (1316–1334): Lettres communes*, ed. G. Mollat (Paris, 1906), pp. 359–60, nos 14213–15. These registers are cited by Forey, 'Military Orders in the Crusading Proposals', p. 331, but he describes them only as an investigation of the Spanish orders, without mention of the emphasis on *priori prioratus hospitalis s. Joannis Jerosolimitani*.

Teutonic Order transferred to Marienburg (mod. Malbork, Poland) in Prussia. This was a safer refuge, far from possibly inimical popes or kings, but such public refocusing of energies away from the Holy Land did not endear the knights to the papacy. Accusations and complaints by the archbishop and citizens of Riga, long enemies of the Teutonic Order, found a sympathetic hearing at the papal court, and Pope Boniface VIII had forced the knights to give up lands and castles. His successor, Clement V, sent a legate to investigate charges against the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order and in 1312 these knight brethren were actually excommunicated for a year. Perhaps they escaped dissolution only because of the diplomatic efforts of Grand Master Karl von Trier, elected in 1311 because he knew French and could speak for the Order at the papal court in Avignon.²³

John XXII, the incumbent pope when Dusburg wrote his chronicle, had even more reason to hate the Teutonic Knights as supporters of his enemy, Emperor Ludwig IV.²⁴ In fact, the emperor's marriage treaty with Margaret of Holland in 1323 was negotiated by a commander of the Order and witnessed by Grand Master Karl von Trier.²⁵ Little wonder that John XXII in February 1324 handed down a judgement in the long dispute at the Curia between the archbishop of Riga and the Order. The Teutonic Knights were condemned for harassing the Christian Rigans and hindering rather than aiding the conversion of the pagans of the Baltic region by enslaving neophytes, not permitting the construction of churches and impeding the travel of missionaries.²⁶

Even more alarming from the Order's perspective, one month before the election of Werner von Orseln (the Grand Master for whom Dusburg wrote his chronicle), Pope John XXII took steps to abolish the one remaining justification of the Order's recruitment of crusaders. Gediminas, ruler of the still pagan Lithuanians, had written letters to John and the Franciscans and Dominicans of the Hanseatic cities implying that he wished to accept baptism.²⁷ The pope took this seriously enough to dispatch high-ranking legates to the Baltic area at the end of May 1324. Even after their envoys reported that Gediminas had said 'Let the Devil baptize me!', the legates forced the Teutonic Order to abide by a peace treaty with the Lithuanians concluded the year before in the wake of the promises

²³ Eric Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades* (London, 1980), pp. 142–45.

²⁴ On the rivalry, H.D. Homann, *Kurkolleg und Königtum im Thronstreit von 1314–1330* (München, 1974). On the Teutonic Order's involvement, see Rasa Mažeika and Stephen C. Rowell, 'Zelatores Maximi: Pope John XXII, Archbishop Frederick of Riga and the Baltic Mission 1305–1340', *Archivum Historiae Pontificiae* 31 (1993), 33–68 (here 38–41).

²⁵ 'Constitutiones et Acta Publica Imperatorum et Regnum' 5, ed. I. Schwalm, MGH *Leges* 4 (Hannover, 1913), no. 779, pp. 606–607.

²⁶ *Vetera Monumenta Poloniae et Lithuaniae*, ed. Augustin Theiner, 1 (Rome, 1860; repr. Osnabruck, 1969), no. 279; *LUB* 1/2, no. 700.

²⁷ New critical edition of these letters: *Chartularium Lithuaniae res gestas magni ducis Gedeminne illustrans*, ed. S.C. Rowell (Vilnius, 2003), pp. 38, 40, 46–66.

to convert.²⁸ Of course the Teutonic Order was furious at this attempt to eliminate its *raison d'être*, as one can see in Dusburg's description of the episode, which contains several misrepresentations and some bitter sarcasm.²⁹ He states that the papal legates made a peace treaty between the Lithuanians and Christians, when in fact the treaty had been signed by the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order in the year before the legates arrived.³⁰ Dusburg accuses the Lithuanians of breaking the peace by attacking Mazovia, although in fact Poland was not included in the treaty. These assertions, which Dusburg and most Teutonic Knights must have known were untrue, were obviously written for outside consumption, and probably for Pope John XXII, who had already given permission in 1324 for the Order's enemy, Friedrich, archbishop of Riga, to excommunicate the Order in Livonia.³¹

It is interesting that Dusburg in his account of the episode gives Gediminas no credit for contacting the pope and in fact does not mention Gediminas's letters, but rather says that the pope acted 'at the suggestion of' the archbishop of Riga.³² And this Archbishop Friedrich, perceived by Dusburg as such a dangerous enemy of the Teutonic Order, at the time of the completion of Dusburg's chronicle in 1326 was at the papal Curia in Avignon, still favoured by the pope, as Rowell has shown.³³ Nor could the Teutonic Order be sure that Gediminas would not again play the baptism card. He could still be converted by the Franciscans and Dominicans whom the envoys of the papal legates found very active in the Lithuanian court in Vilnius.³⁴

Historians of Dusburg have not, I believe, given enough thought to the probability that Peter von Dusburg not only reported Lithuanian events but was influenced by them. Pollakówna alone mentions the episode of Gediminas's letters, but only as part of the general troubles of the Order at the time, which she feels led Dusburg to write a general justification of the Order.³⁵ Perhaps – but the lack of dissemination of the chronicle's manuscripts may indicate a lack of effort to disseminate the work to 'Christendom' in general. No historian seems at the

²⁸ *Chartularium Lithuaniae*, no. 54. The best modern account of this episode is in Rowell, *Lithuania Ascending*, pp. 189–262.

²⁹ Peter von Dusburg, pp. 190–92.

³⁰ Peter von Dusburg, p. 191; treaty: *LUB* 2, nos 694, 707; *Chartularium Lithuaniae*, no. 24, 51.

³¹ *Registra Vaticana* 77 f. 25v. no. 1072; *Chartularium Lithuaniae*, no. 47; cf. *Codex Diplomaticus Prussicus*, ed. J. Voigt, 6 vols (Königsberg, 1830), 2: 144–50.

³² Peter von Dusburg, p. 190.

³³ Rowell, 'Zelatores Maximi', p. 54–55.

³⁴ The envoys to Gediminas's court in Vilnius 'went to the Friars Minor to hear Mass'. At court, they found Franciscans and at least one Dominican acting as scribes, interpreters and even advisors of Grand Duke Gediminas: *LUB* 1/6, p. 477–83; new critical edition in Rowell, *Chartularium*, no. 54. See Hans Niedermeier, 'Die Franziskaner in Preußen, Livland und Litauen im Mittelalter', *ZfO* 27 (1978), 1–31.

³⁵ Pollakówna, *Kronika Piotra*, p. 195.

moment to emphasize the most elemental threat to the Teutonic Order at the time when Dusburg was writing, i.e. the hostility of Pope John XXII, who after all had the power to abolish the Order's crusade privileges even if he did not find a secular ruler to help him actually abolish the Order. If Gediminas accepted baptism, this threat would be greatly increased. As it was, the Teutonic Order did not possess specific crusade declarations for Lithuania, but had simply transferred papal provisions originally made for Prussia, without obtaining papal permission.³⁶ Now that the pope was taking such a close interest in Lithuania, this tenuous link to crusading status could disappear at the stroke of a pen. Guest crusaders who came with their armies to fight in Lithuania wanted to fight pagans and were not too fussy about the whys and wherefores, but would they come without the remission of sins (as was popularly thought) granted to crusaders?

Even if the Lithuanians stayed pagan, just at the time when Dusburg was completing his chronicle Pope John XXII had shown an alarming new tendency to use them as allies. In early 1326, Lithuanians marched through Prussia, their safe passage through the Teutonic Order's lands guaranteed by the pope, and attacked Brandenburg, ruled by Margrave Ludwig, the son of Emperor Ludwig IV.³⁷ Dusburg describes the attack, adding colour with a story of a beautiful captive Christian maiden cut in two by a pagan leader to stop Lithuanians from contending over this prize.³⁸ The use of fierce pagans to attack Christian enemies of the pope may have scandalized some chroniclers,³⁹ but John XXII, famously described by

³⁶ Axel Ehlers, 'The Crusade of the Teutonic Knights against Lithuania Reconsidered', in *Crusade and Conversion on the Medieval Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, pp. 21–44. See also James Brundage, 'Crusades, Clerics and Violence: Reflections on a Canonical Theme', in *The Experience of Crusading 1: Western Approaches*, ed. Marcus Bull and Norman Housley (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 147–56 (here 152), on the general tendency of the military orders to use the canon law of corporations as 'a mechanism for investing a transient movement [i.e. specific crusades – R.M.] with something that came close to immortality'.

³⁷ SRP 1: 252 and 2: 738, cited by Stephen C. Rowell, 'Pagans, Peace and the Pope 1322–1324: Lithuania in the Centre of European Diplomacy', *Archivum Historiae Pontificiae* 28 (1990), 63–98 (here 94).

³⁸ Peter von Dusburg, p. 193.

³⁹ The *Kronika Zbraslavska* implies that the peace the papal legates endorsed in Vilnius was made expressly to allow the Lithuanians to attack Brandenburg: *Fontes rerum Bohemicarum*, ed. F. Palacky et al., 8 vols (Prague, 1873–1932), IV: 278–79. *Ex permissione Johannis pape inter Cruciferos domus Deutonice in Prusia et saracenos dictos Lythuanos sunt amicales per triennium facte treuge, ita sane, [...] quod heu in magnum detrimentum christianorum devenit et ecclesie. Nam inveteratus dierum Lokotko, rex Polonie [...] pape complacere, ut asseruit, contra marchionem Brandinburgensem [...] innumerabiles Lythowanorum turbas pugnaturus sibi assumit, marchionatumque Brandenburgensem invadit ac iuxta civitatem Frankinfurd et in universo ipsius confinio plagam in christianos exercuit et tyrannidem nimis magnam. [...] Tanta mala ibi per paganos tunc perpetrata sunt, quod sine gemitu cordis narrari not possunt.*

Sidney Painter as ‘an almost unbelievably cantankerous old man’, was not wont to be influenced by public opinion.⁴⁰

So, the Grand Master needed to prepare for the worst by justifying the Order’s wars even if the last pagans of the Baltic area converted, or if the pope was willing to overlook their lack of Christianity. I would suggest that certain parts of Dusburg’s chronicle present legal arguments for this to be used by the Grand Master and by the legal counsel the Order regularly engaged at the Curia.⁴¹ If, as James Brundage puts it, the Teutonic Knights ‘adjusted to the new legalism of the thirteenth century even more readily than the Hospitallers had done’,⁴² then Peter von Dusburg, even while trying to write an entertaining and inspiring history, may have striven to contribute towards a legal defence of the Order’s wars.

One element of this defence stems from the originally Roman and then medieval and modern doctrine of just war.⁴³ Central to it is the concept that evil in an enemy does not *ipso facto* justify invasion, a tradition so strong it continues to bedevil the promoters of current wars. As defined by the ancient Romans, just wars could be waged to repel enemy attacks or to recover what had been lost because of the attacks: property, lands or rights.⁴⁴ St Augustine expanded this tradition by defining just war as avenging injuries or regaining what an enemy has seized.⁴⁵ Both Cicero (as repeated by Isidore of Seville) and Augustine were quoted in the definitive law code of the Middle Ages, Gratian’s *Decretum*.⁴⁶ With this Christian gloss, the ancient Roman concept of just war has survived until our own day (and was reflected in the early years of the twenty-first century in debates about the American invasion of Iraq, which was initially presented as a defensive

⁴⁰ Brian Tierney and Sidney Painter, *Western Europe in the Middle Ages 300–1475*, 2nd edn (New York, 1974), p. 433.

⁴¹ James Brundage, ‘The Lawyers of the Military Orders’, in *The Military Orders: Fighting for the Faith and Caring for the Sick*, ed. Malcolm Barber (Aldershot, 1994), pp. 346–57 (here 356).

⁴² Brundage, ‘The Lawyers of the Military Orders’, p. 354.

⁴³ On medieval theories of just war, the standard works are now Frederick Russell, *The Just War in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1975) and James Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law and the Crusader* (Madison, Wis., 1969). See most recently *Ethics, Nationalism, and Just War: Medieval and Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Henrik Syse and Gregory Reichberg (Washington, DC, 2007).

⁴⁴ Cicero, *De republica*: II, 23, 35: *Illa iniusta bella sunt, quae sunt sine causa suscepta. Nam extra ulciscendi aut propulsandorum hostium causam bellum geri nullum potest [. . .] Nullum bellum iustum habetur nisi denunciatum, nisi indictum, nisi repetitis rebus*. Cited in Russell, *Just War*, p. 5, n. 20.

⁴⁵ Augustine of Hippo, *Quaestionum in Heptateuchum, liber sextus*, 10: *Iusta autem bella definiri solent, quae ulciscuntur injurias, si qua gens vel civitas, quae bello petenda est, vel vindicare neglexerit quod a suis improbe factum est, vel reddere quod per injurias ablatum est*. PL 34, col. 781. Indicated in Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law*, p. 19.

⁴⁶ Gratian, *Decretum*, Causa 23, q. 2, c. 1 and 2: PL 187, col. 1166.

necessity through what turned out to be an invented threat of weapons of mass destruction).⁴⁷

Justifications for medieval crusades, especially those emanating from the papacy, often reflected the doctrine of just war. Carl Erdmann categorically declared in his classic work on crusade ideology that, in the early Church, waging war upon pagans 'was regarded as justified only if they were the aggressors and fell upon the Christians with pitiless hostility'.⁴⁸ As Erdmann pithily remarks, the distinction between aggressive and defensive wars, 'though very difficult to make and often based on fiction, remained decisive for Christian doctrine'.⁴⁹ An ideology of 'holy war' was first developed to cope with heretics, who could be said to be attacking the Church, while crusades against infidels had to be justified by an appeal for the 'regaining' of Jerusalem and the defence of Eastern Christians.⁵⁰ If the concept of crusades as 'holy war' added the new element of positive virtue to fighting in a blessed cause, the theory was still based upon Augustine's definitions of the just causes for war.⁵¹

In the thirteenth century, Thomas Aquinas repeated and elaborated existing papal prohibitions against compelling infidels to accept Christianity. Wars against pagans were just only if the pagans had attacked Christians or God Himself.⁵² Forced conversion – the doctrine of *compellere intrare* from the Gospel story of those who were forced to come to the wedding feast (Luke 14.23) – always had

⁴⁷ Neta C. Crawford, 'Just War Theory and the U.S. Counterterror War', *Perspectives on Politics* 1 (2003), 5–25; W. Michael Reisman and Andrea Armstrong, 'The Past and Future of the Claim of Preemptive Self-Defense', *The American Journal of International Law* 100 (2006), 525–50; Joseph Loconte, 'Fighting a Just War in Iraq', in *The Heritage Foundation*, www.heritage.org/Research/MiddleEast/wm251.cfm [accessed 22 December 2007].

⁴⁸ Carl Erdmann, *The Origin of the Idea of Crusade*, trans. Marshall Baldwin and Walter Goffart (Princeton, 1977), p. 12.

⁴⁹ Erdmann, *The Origin of the Idea of Crusade*, p. 8. Henrik Syse points out that in just war theory from Augustine to Grotius 'there was no real opposition to *initiating* warfare for the sake of repelling injustice', but he also stresses that, for Augustine, war had to be undertaken to secure peace – i.e. to contain aggression: 'Augustine and Just War' in Syse and Reichberg, *Ethics, Nationalism and Just War*, pp. 36–50 (here 48, 39). See the discussion in the same volume by Phillip Gray, 'Just War, Schism and Peace in St. Augustine', pp. 51–71 on Augustine's views of heresy as a danger justifying the use of force.

⁵⁰ Erdmann, *The Origin of the Idea of Crusade*, pp. 265 and 331–32. See William of Tyre's account of the preaching of the Second Crusade to relieve the 'intolerable hardships of their Eastern brothers', cited by Susanna Throop, 'Vengeance and the Crusades', *Crusades* 5 (2006), 21–38 (here 32).

⁵¹ Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law*, p. 29. Tyerman notes that in the fourteenth century Honoré Bonet, although 'well versed in canon law and history [...] depended solely on a just cause – occupation of Christian land or rebellion against Christian rule – and papal authority': Christopher Tyerman, *The Invention of the Crusades* (Toronto, 1998), p. 39.

⁵² *Summa Theologiae* II-II q. 10, art. 8, quoted in Russell, *Just War*, p. 285.

its proponents, but this did not become part of canon law.⁵³ Even the most famous advocate of the monastic military orders, St Bernard of Clairvaux, who wrote 'The Christian glories in the death of the pagan, because Christ is glorified', still felt obliged to add 'Nor would even pagans have to be slain, if there were any other way to restrain them from such great attacks and oppressions of the faithful. In the present situation, however, it is better that they be killed than that the rod wielded by sinners continue to hover over the fate of the just.'⁵⁴

Now the Teutonic Order had first come into the Baltic area and received its original papal crusade privileges on very traditional just war grounds: the defence of missionaries in the Baltic region and of Christians in Poland, as well as punishment for 'injuries to the holy name', as Pope Innocent III declared.⁵⁵ Dusburg was well aware of this, and the very beginning of his chronicle presented the Teutonic Order as coming to the Baltic area to defend Christians, and having immediately to avenge injuries to God and His Church. Although whole passages

⁵³ On an eleventh-century proponent of this view: Hans-Dietrich Kahl, 'Compellere intrare: Die Wendenpolitik Bruns von Querfurt im Lichte hochmittelalterlichen Missions- und Völkerrechts', *ZfO* 4 (1955), 161–93, 360–401, reprinted in *Heidenmission und Kreuzzugsgedanke in der deutschen Ostpolitik des Mittelalters*, ed. Helmut Beumann (Bad Homburg, 1963), pp. 177–274. Marius Ščavinskas uses Kahl to suggest that the Teutonic Order had available a developed and accepted Church ideology of forced conquest. This ignores the fact that Bruno von Querfurt did not manage to obtain the support of emperor or pope for his planned war on pagans and was himself killed on a *peaceful* mission to the Prussians: Ščavinskas, 'Karinių/prievartinių misijų veiklos metodų problema baltų regione', *Lietuvos istorijos metraštis* for 2005 (2006), 5–28 (here 22).

⁵⁴ Bernard of Clairvaux, *Liber ad milites Templi: De laude novae militiae*, III, PL 182, col. 924: *Non quidem vel Pagani necandi essent, si quo modo aliter possent a nimia infestatione seu oppressione fidelium cohiberi. Nunc autem melius est ut occidantur, quam certe relinquatur virga peccatorum super sortem justorum: ne forte extendant iusti ad iniquitatem manus suas.* Tomaž Mastnak misinterprets this passage when he writes that here 'the pagans do not appear as human. Their very being is blasphemous.' Clearly Bernard is at least paying lip service to the notion that pagans, like all men, should not be killed except when necessary for defence, as the basic doctrine of just war states. Mastnak contradicts himself by stating that, for Bernard, 'the very existence of non-Christians demanded that Christians take up arms', yet quotes extensively Bernard's raging against Saracens who 'take to themselves the heritage of the sanctuary of God' and Bernard's exaltation of crusaders as 'defenders'. Tomaž Mastnak, *Crusading Peace: Christendom, the Muslim World and Western Political Order* (Berkeley, 2002), pp. 160–62.

⁵⁵ Innocent III, 'Suggestor scelerum', PL 216, col. 117; *Bullarium Danicum*, ed. A. Krarup (Copenhagen, 1932), pp. 71–72: *idolorum cultibus inherentes christiani nominis professores abhorrent eosque, qui sibi predicant verbum Dei, tamquam maleficos persecuntur.* See also Innocent III, 'Etsi verba', PL 215, col. 429: *Barbaris infestantibus ibi novellam plantationem fidei Christianae resistant;* Innocent III, 'Sicut ecclesiastice', in *Die Register Innocenz III.*, ed. Othmar Hageneder, Werner Maleczek and Alfred A. Strnad (Rome, 1979–), 2, no. 182; Honorius III, 'Compatientes angustiiis': *PUB* 1, no. 15; cf. no. 22: *eos, qui iam per baptismum induerunt eundem defendere satagunt ab incursibus paganorum.*

of Dusburg's Prologue are taken from the Prologue to the Statutes of the Teutonic Order,⁵⁶ our chronicler expands this theme. He writes of Prussians attacking Poles, terrorizing Christians and trampling a consecrated Communion host, i.e. insulting God himself in the eyes of Catholics; this is the sort of tale one might expect to find frequently in the Order's propaganda, but actually it never appears again in Dusburg's chronicle.⁵⁷ This would suggest that it is placed in the account of the Order coming to the Baltic area to justify the Order's crusade. Whatever his source, Dusburg here probably deliberately focuses on not just any war atrocities, but rather specific actions which are the traditional precursors of a just war: attacks on citizens, attacks on the sovereign or ruler (i.e. God) and insults or injuries, in this case to God.

Of all the historians of Dusburg, Janusz Trupinda alone mentions his use of the doctrine of *bellum justum*. However, Trupinda discusses only the justification provided by defensive war, and rightly remarks that this was a difficult stance to maintain in the Baltic Crusade and the Order's wars in Poland, where the Teutonic Knights were often the invaders.⁵⁸ By the time Dusburg was writing, the Teutonic Knights were at war with Christian Poland and Christian Riga, and had actually been excommunicated several times for this by papal legates. Moreover, the Order made treaties of peace and trade with the pagan Lithuanians in between bouts of fighting.⁵⁹ Teutonic Knights and pagan nobles might even dine together or exchange good-natured banter over the luck of battle.⁶⁰ Hence, the Teutonic Order's claims to be the defenders of local Christians were becoming ever more dubious.

Dusburg does use another medieval justification for violence, first developed by St Augustine: the Church's perceived need to punish heretics and apostates. Because of this, Dusburg presents all three Prussian rebellions as apostasies (i.e. an abandonment of a previous Christianity) and enemies of the Order such as Duke Swantopolk of Pomerania are *ipso facto* apostates. This is a good indication that the intended audience of the chronicle is not only the knights of the Teutonic Order or their guest crusaders, who would have scarcely cared about the difference between infidels and apostates. The stress on apostasy is meant for ecclesiastics,

⁵⁶ See Max Perlbach, *Die Statuten des Deutschen Ordens nach den ältesten Handschriften* (Halle, 1890), pp. 23–25.

⁵⁷ Peter von Dusburg, p. 34.

⁵⁸ Trupinda, *Ideologia*, p. 105–6.

⁵⁹ Rasa Mažeika, 'Of Cabbages and Knights: Trade and Trade Treaties with the Infidel on the Northern Frontier, 1200–1390', *Journal of Medieval History* 20 (1994), 63–76.

⁶⁰ Peter von Dusburg, p. 177; Wigand von Marburg, 'Cronica Nova Prutenica', in *SRP* 2: 456–57 about Grand Duke Vytenis (c. 1295–1316): *Post breve intervallum facte sunt treuge, et rex [Vytenis] ait preceptoribus, unus e vobis, cuius caput ferreum fuit, molestavit me, quem libens adhuc viderem. Magister quoque destinavit ei eum Tusemer dictum, cui rex: tuo acuto gladio me quasi interfecisses; et ait: sic factum fuisset, si mei expectassetis*. See also Rasa Mažeika, 'An Amicable Enmity: Some Peculiarities in Teutonic-Balt Relations', in *The Germans and the East*, ed. Charles Ingrao (West Lafayette, 2008), pp. 49–58.

and probably for the pope. Unfortunately for the Teutonic Order, the Lithuanians could not be labelled apostates (which shows Gediminas's wisdom in rejecting baptism). In 1326, when Dusburg was writing, pagan Lithuanians could not even be said to be a danger to Christian Poles, since the marriage of Gediminas's daughter to the heir of the throne of Poland the year before (1325) meant that the Poles and Lithuanians were allies and not enemies. Bluntly, when Dusburg wrote his chronicle, the pagan Lithuanians were a danger mostly to the Order's own lands or forts, which the Order had often invaded Lithuanian territory to build.

Dusburg therefore presents the Teutonic Knights as martyrs and victims, compared to St Stephen, who was stoned to death for his Christianity, and to the Biblical story of the three Israelites cast into the fiery furnace (Daniel 3.10–24) for not bowing to pagan idols.⁶¹ It seems odd to see these particular examples used, since there was no question of coercion to the Teutonic Knights to give up *their* faith. Certainly guest crusader knights would not be impressed by whining about how weak the Order was. But here Dusburg is, I think, making a legal point: since the Teutonic Knights are the weaker party, they can attack first to ensure an effective defence.

Dusburg's constant references to the Books of Maccabees serve as *exempla* of warriors for the faith, but also reinforce the image of martyrdom and of the few against the many, for the stress of this section of the Bible is on the small number of faithful who rise up against a much stronger enemy in defence of the true religion.⁶² Significantly, Dusburg's version of the original papal privileges which established the Teutonic Order in the Baltic area is followed by quotations from the biblical books of Maccabees and Deuteronomy which exhort warriors to fight 'against these nations that are assembled against us to destroy us and our sanctuary' (1 Macc. 3.39), and not to be dismayed at being outnumbered, because God will give victory (Deut. 20.1).⁶³ This passage is immediately followed by Dusburg's long discursus on the spiritual weapons which the Teutonic Knights must have to prepare for battle. Again, the imagery is that of martyrdom. True enough, there were relatively few knights of the Order: and many more pagans. Yet many 'guest crusaders' were in the Order's army, while the image of the weak knight facing the fierce pagan disregards the initially superior weapons and

⁶¹ Peter von Dusburg, pp. 21–22.

⁶² Mary Fischer, in her exhaustive studies of the use of imagery from Maccabees in Dusburg, notes that in Church tradition the Books of the Maccabees were cited as an example of martyrdom rather than warfare: Mary Fischer, '*Di himels rote*': *The Idea of Christian Chivalry in the Chronicles of the Teutonic Order* (Göppingen, 1991), p. 96; Fischer, 'Biblical Heroes and the Uses of Literature: The Teutonic Order in the Late Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries', in *Crusade and Conversion on the Medieval Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, 261–75 (here 269). It is true that Dusburg emphasizes that the Maccabees are warriors, but the two roles of martyr and warrior are no longer exclusive in the era of the crusades.

⁶³ Peter von Dusburg, p. 38.

armour of the Germans, and arises at least as much from ideological necessity as from military reality. If the pagans are strong and the Teutonic Order weak, the Baltic Crusade is a war of defence and not of conquest. Nevertheless, Dusburg cannot resist gloating that 'all the pagans who inhabited the land of Prussia are exterminated'.⁶⁴ Jesus has ejected the peoples of the lands of Prussia and Livonia and planted the vineyard of the Lord.⁶⁵ If the Teutonic Knights have succeeded in such ethnic cleansing and conquered many peoples, how are they martyrs? And why, the Order's enemies were asking, was further defence necessary?

If the Teutonic Order, despite being outnumbered, nevertheless subjugated the Old Prussians and held its own against the Lithuanians, says Dusburg, the Bible gives the explanation: 'The most high God hath wrought signs and wonders toward me.'⁶⁶ Paraphrases of this biblical quotation (Daniel 3.99) appear throughout the chronicle. What are the signs and wonders? They are the victories of the Teutonic Knights against great odds, 'since a small number of them subjugated to themselves such a strong and fierce and numerous Prussian nation'.⁶⁷

Signa et mirabilia fecit is a central aspect of Dusburg's legal argument and not simply an assertion that the Teutonic Order is blessed by God. The victories against odds are not only proof that the war in the Baltic region is just because God has favoured the victors. These *mirabilia* were essential to keeping the legal status of the Baltic Crusade as a defensive war even when the Order was clearly on the offensive and on the ascendant, because the marvellous nature of the victories allows the Order to still be viewed as the weaker party. The Teutonic Knights, Dusburg is implying, are victims to be saved by *signa* from God, thus they cannot be the dangerous aggressors depicted by their enemies (especially the archbishop of Riga) at the papal court. Moreover, the Order's miraculous survival and victories could be argued as evidence that the Baltic Crusade had become a forum for direct divine intervention, when human legal categories of just war (with their, to the Order, embarrassing emphasis on defence) became irrelevant. In this aspect, Dusburg's chronicle could be viewed as a legal brief to be used by the Grand Master to fight for his Order's continued existence.

Probably the average Teutonic Knight, joyfully hacking his way through a battle line, cared little about the justifications for his war.⁶⁸ But Peter von Dusburg

⁶⁴ Peter von Dusburg, p. 23.

⁶⁵ Psalm 79.8–9, quoted by Peter von Dusburg, p. 28: *ejecisti gentes de terra Prussie et Lyvonie et plantasti eam*.

⁶⁶ Peter von Dusburg, p. 21: *Signa et mirabilia fecit apud me dominus excelsus*.

⁶⁷ Peter von Dusburg, p. 22.

⁶⁸ See Marcus Bull, 'Views of Muslims and of Jerusalem in Miracle Stories, c. 1000–c. 1200: Reflections on the Study of First Crusaders' Motivations', in *The Experience of Crusading* 1: 13–38 (here 15): 'The relationship between the doing of crusading and the writing of crusades, the dynamic between lived sequential experience and the narrativizing (sometimes near-simultaneous) of that experience, is something that scholars perhaps need to investigate more fully.'

wrote his Latin chronicle for the Grand Master, and one of its purposes, I would maintain, is to provide the Order with ammunition to fend off complaints against it at the Curia, at a dangerous time for military monastic orders and for the Teutonic Order in particular because of the favour that Pope John XXII had just shown to the Lithuanian ruler Gediminas. This should affect the use of the chronicle by modern historians, since it seems that, like politicians in our own day, Peter von Dusburg sometimes needed to manipulate his evidence to fit a rather narrow definition of justifiable warfare.

PART III

Converting Landscapes,
Converting Peoples

Chapter 7

Sacralization of the Landscape: Converting Trees and Measuring Land in the Danish Crusades against the Wends

Kurt Villads Jensen

Medieval language was, in many respects, much more sophisticated than modern man tends to realize at first glance. Multifaceted layers of interpretation were developed for biblical exegesis from the time of the earliest Church Fathers, so that by the High Middle Ages every word and every sentence had four *sensus*, that is four different understandings, even though all of them pointed to the same meaning. This flexibility of thinking must have permeated all kinds of texts and should therefore be taken into account in any attempt to understand a medieval source, and the relationship between seemingly plain narrative and allegorical interpretation was especially close in medieval history writing.¹ It might be natural for us today to assume that a word can have only one meaning, and that it cannot mean one thing and its opposite at the same time. Not so in the Middle Ages. An obvious example is the word *pax*.

To restore *pax* in the High Middle Ages meant to wage wars against enemies, and to establish an everlasting peace often meant to fight continuous crusades. When, after eleven years of civil wars, King Valdemar I of Denmark eventually succeeded in killing his rivals to the throne to become sole ruler in 1157, he was praised by the chronicler Helmold of Bosau as *moderator pacis* (manager of peace) and as *filius pacis*, the son of peace upon whose house the peace of the Lord shall rest (Luke 10.5–6).² This meant that in practice he was now free to concentrate all his military efforts on leading expeditions across the Baltic Sea against the heathens along the shores of the northern part of what is now Germany, and Valdemar did so at least once every year for the rest of his life.³ When he died in 1182, Valdemar was praised on a leaden plaque in his grave as *pacis conservator* (the defender of peace) precisely because of his great merit as a warrior.⁴ This is not to deny that Valdemar may have brought about peace to a land riven by rival factions among the Danes,

¹ Hans Werner Goetz, *Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsbewußtsein im hohen Mittelalter* (Berlin, 1999).

² Helmold of Bosau, *Helmoldi presbyteri Bozoviensis Chronica Slavorum*, ed. Bernhard Schmeidler and Heinz Stob (Darmstadt, 1963), p. 302.

³ Curt Weibull, 'Saxos berättelser om de danska vendertågen 1158–1185', *Historisk Tidsskrift* (København) 83 (1983), 35–70.

⁴ Jens Jacob Asmussen Worsaa, *Kongegravene i Ringsted Kirke* (København, 1858).

but he did so through war and by directing military energy away from the central parts of his realm and towards the frontiers against heathendom. *Pax*, therefore, had a double meaning which it is difficult to render in modern translation, as is the case with so many other fundamental medieval concepts.

Sacralization of Pagan Landscapes

Danish and German kings and dukes had fought missionary wars against the pagan Slavic, or to use the contemporary term, Wendish tribes on the southern coast of the Baltic Sea since the middle of the eleventh century, and from around 1100 at least, these wars were clearly understood as crusades.⁵ They were fought regularly, normally every year, with armies setting out in the early spring and raiding until summer, and then returning home to help with the harvest; sometimes they resumed crusading in late August or early September and lived off the pagans' harvest and continued warfare until the October storms made it difficult to cross the Baltic Sea.

The frontier line between Christianity and the heathen lands was slowly pushed forward and enforced by the construction of castles and the establishment of churches and monasteries.⁶ In 1168, King Valdemar I conquered the settlement of Arkona on the pagan island of Rügen.⁷ It was the strongest heathen fortress and cult centre in northern Europe, protected on three sides by the steep white cliffs which, in clear weather, are dimly visible from the southernmost coast of Denmark. The cliffs were 'higher than a crossbow bolt could reach',⁸ and the fourth side was closed by a wall and palisade. The pagan temple was a beautifully carved wooden building with a sacred inner chamber that only the pagan high priest was allowed to enter. The Danish chronicler Saxo informs us that the wooden statue of the god Svantevit had four heads, each of them without a beard and with short hair, and held a drinking horn and a silver sword. The pagans used to make sacrifices to this idol of cattle, wine and honey cakes as large as a man is high. Next to the temple was the god's stable. This housed a sacred white horse, which some mornings was

⁵ General works on this subject are William Urban, *The Baltic Crusade* (DeKalb, Ill., 1975); Eric Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades: The Baltic and the Catholic Frontier, 1100–1525* (London, 1980); John Lind, Carsten Selch Jensen, Kurt Villads Jensen and Ane Bysted, *Danske korstog: Krig og mission i Østersøen* (København, 2004).

⁶ For the Baltic lands as frontier societies, see *Medieval Frontier Societies*, ed. Robert Bartlett and Angus MacKay (Oxford, 1989); *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, ed. Alan V. Murray (Aldershot, 2001), especially the article by William Urban, 'The Frontier Thesis and the Baltic Crusade', pp. 45–71; *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices*, ed. David Abulafia and Nora Berend (Aldershot, 2002).

⁷ Helmold of Bosau, pp. 370–74; Saxo, *Gesta Danorum*, ed. Karsten Friis-Jensen, trans. Peter Zeeberg, 2 vols (København, 2005), 2: 354–72.

⁸ Saxo 2: 354.

found covered in white sweat after Svantevit had been riding it all night in battle. All pagans paid tax to the temple, and one-third of booty won in battle was given to the god.

Arkona fell after a short siege: the temple and the idol were demolished and burned, the pagans were baptized, and their leaders had to swear to provide troops for the king's future crusades further eastwards along the coast of the Baltic Sea. The ordinary crusaders in the army protested that they had been deprived of *speciocissima vindicta*, 'the most beautiful revenge', because the pagans were spared and not killed.⁹ King and archbishop argued that this might facilitate future conquests and conversions, and that anyhow it was shameful for rulers to listen to the people. King Valdemar reported the victory to Pope Alexander III and was congratulated as being armed with the shield of faith and praised for having created peace and expanded Christianity.¹⁰

Christianization in practice began immediately. The day after the surrender of Arkona, the chaplains of the Danish nobles entered the city and began to give the first, elementary instructions in the new faith to the pagans. The pagan temple was broken down and the wooden idol of Svantevit was dragged outside, with great care taken that it should not fall down and kill any of the Christians, which would have been understood as a bad omen.¹¹ When evening came, the cooks in the army began to cut the statue into small pieces so that it was slowly transformed from a revered sacred object into fuel for the crusaders' soup cauldrons, to the shame of the pagans who began to realize that their beliefs had been nothing but vain and powerless superstition. The temple in Arkona was burned down and a new church was built from the beams of the catapults, so that the instruments of war now became the house of peace, as Saxo wrote. The machines intended for crushing the bodies of enemies now became instruments for saving their souls.

The whole island of Rügen was divided into twelve parishes, churches were built and priests were ordained and provided for, both from the pagan temple treasure and from resources from Denmark. The new faith was confirmed by miracles when some of those who were weak or lame began to walk again, and when sceptics and blasphemers were paralysed. The presence of Christianity was made visible by the physical erection of church buildings which may have been relatively small in size, but which enclosed a sacred space in the middle of a world that was marked by warfare. This provided peace in a literal sense; we know from contemporary sources that the local population soon learned to seek refuge in the churches when crusaders later returned to the area and had difficulty in distinguishing clearly between nearly converted and newly converted.¹² But the new churches also established a sacred space with peace in the more aggressive sense because later crusades were justified as necessary military actions to protect

⁹ Saxo, 2: 366–68.

¹⁰ *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 4 series in 41 vols (København, 1938–2002), 1/2, no. 189.

¹¹ Saxo, 2: 370–72.

¹² Saxo, 2: 418.

the newly established churches, and to defend the new plantation from the attack of those who still remained heathen.

The next step after the building of churches was the establishment of Cistercian monasteries a little further eastwards, in the missionary areas among the pagans. We know much more about the monasteries than about the churches, because a number of donation charters have survived which reveal in greater detail what actually happened. In 1172, a Danish monastery was founded in Dargun in Pomerania on 25 June.¹³ It was the feast day of King Valdemar's father, St Knud, who had been canonized in 1170 immediately after the conquest of Rügen and whose *vita* depicted him as a true crusader saint.¹⁴ The altar in Dargun was consecrated by Berno, bishop of Schwerin, himself a Cistercian, who specified that this altar was the first to be erected in this part of the Wendish lands.¹⁵ He donated to the monastery ten marks per year from the inns in Lüchow, two salt pans in Kolbacz and half the fishing in the upper part of the River Peene. This income was not simply tax revenue, but constituted local contributions to an institution with a new religious purpose. Three years later, the Danish king's ally Duke Kasimir of Pomerania gave the same monastery the freedom to bring in and settle on its lands Germans, Danes or Slavs, or anyone else of any ethnic origin or profession, so that the Cistercians could colonize the land, divide it into parishes and provide it with priests. To this he added the privilege that Dargun could keep an inn and serve beers of Slavic, German or Danish brew.¹⁶ Beer and inns seem to have been important elements of Danish crusading in the twelfth century and were an important source of income.

More interesting in this context, however, is the description of the donation of land in these documents. The areas that were given to monasteries were described by characteristic physical landmarks:

From the waterfall east of Dargun over Guhtkepole to the moor of tamarisk and hence to the salt lake called *Glambike lough* in Slavic and from there westwards to the very big oak tree with a large stone beneath it [...] and further to the mounds called Trigorke which are the burial mounds of peoples from antiquity [...] to the oak where the ground beneath is like a valley [...] to the big oak marked with a cross and called *knezegraniza* [ruler's border] in Slavic. From this oak to the line of trees marked with crosses.¹⁷

¹³ In general, see Stella Maria Szacherska, 'The Political Role of the Danish Monasteries in Pomerania 1171–1223', *Medieval Scandinavia* 10 (1977), 122–55.

¹⁴ *Vitae sanctorum Danorum*, ed. M. Cl. Gertz (København, 1908–12), pp. 167–247.

¹⁵ *Mecklenburgisches Urkundenbuch*, 24 vols (Schwerin, 1863–1913), 1: 111.

¹⁶ *Mecklenburgisches Urkundenbuch* 1: 114.

¹⁷ *Mecklenburgisches Urkundenbuch* 1:114: *Primum in uado Rokeniz, quod est ad orientem Dargun, ... et aque decursum, donec ueniant contra Guthkepolle, ubi de amne exeunt ad aquilonem in quandam uia in mirica ... in quandam profundam paludem salicum, que et slavice dicitur glambike lough, a qua procedunt uersus occidentem in quandam*

These are typical formulations from donation charters from the period. If there were no other significant marks in the landscape, there were trees with crosses.

The number of oak trees figuring in these letters is remarkable. Some are near stones, valleys or rivers; some are large, some old, some without bark, some burned. They were known to contemporaries, locals and newcomers alike, because they were old sacred trees, although this is not specified directly in the donation documents. It is, however, stated directly that many of these old oak trees had been marked by crosses, and sometimes it is obvious from the formulations that these crosses were newly cut. We must imagine that as one of their first tasks in the newly conquered area, the missionary Cistercians simply walked around the land and cut crosses in trees, especially in the old oaks. This was a very practical matter, one might argue, simply to mark the boundaries of the monastery's land, but it was also an ideological and symbolic act, a kind of baptism of the trees, because the old oak trees were sacred to the pagans, as we know from other sources.

The *vita* of the missionary bishop Otto of Bamberg, which dates from the middle of the twelfth century, relates how around 1120 he had converted the pagans in the city of Julin (mod. Wolin, Poland) by a miracle.¹⁸ When the high priest of the pagans had lost a religious disputation with Otto, he tried to kill him with the holy lance of Julius Caesar, from whom the city had supposedly got its name, but just at the moment when the pagan priest was about to throw the lance, he was turned into stone. Otto was then able to build a church and extirpate the cult of heathendom, but although he tried very hard, he could not force the newly converted to cut down the old trees. In Julin, there was an old nut tree of unusual beauty, dedicated to the pagan god; in Stettin (mod. Szczecin, Poland), there was an enormous, leafy oak with a spring beneath it. In both places the former pagans solemnly swore that they would never again adore the tree in any way, but that they would only sit in its shadow, protected from the sun, and enjoy the beautiful sight of the tree. These trees were obviously too important and too sacred to be sacrificed to the new, Christian God. The result was a kind of syncretism. The former pagans were willing to accept Christianity and a new church building, but in Stettin they later put up an altar in the church for their old god next to the altar of Christ. And they wanted to keep their trees.

The belief in holy trees was an old one, and it was difficult to stamp out. According to Adam of Bremen, writing around 1070, it originated in the Saxons' veneration of Irminsul, which in Latin means *universalis columpna*, 'as if it sustains the whole world'. This superstition of the Saxons had been taken over by the Slavs

magnum quercum, sub qua et quidem magnus lapis terre affixus iacet ... et inde ad quosdam tumulos, qui slavice dicuntur trigorke, antiquorum uidelicet sepulcra ... et inde adhuc uersus meridiem in quendam quercum, circa quam terra bassa est quasi uallis quedam ... in quendam quercum cruce signatam, quod signum dicitur slavice knezegrana.

¹⁸ *Die Prüfeninger Vita Bischof Ottos I. von Bamberg nach der Fassung des Großen Österreichischen Legendars*, ed. Jürgen Petersohn (Hannover, 1999), pp. 86, 125.

and was still current among them in his own day, Adam wrote.¹⁹ Adam has also given us the famous description of the pagan temple in Uppsala in Sweden with its idols of Thor, Odin and Freyr. Outside the temple was an enormous tree that was green in both summer and winter, and whose branches stretched far out to all corners of the world. Beneath it was a spring in which the pagans sacrificed humans to their gods. Next to the temple was a grove in which all the trees had been made holy by the bloody annual sacrifice of seventy-two men and animals.²⁰ The veracity of Adam's description has been much challenged recently, and it may well be a construction, but it still reflects the common concept of paganism around the Baltic Sea in the late eleventh century, which included the veneration of trees.²¹

For the missionary Christians, there were two possible solutions to the problem of the trees. One was to incorporate them into the new cult, either cutting crosses into them or reusing them physically in the building of new churches. The former pagans would probably have understood these actions more as a cult continuation, so that they would venerate what they had previously venerated, but in a new context. The new faith did not supplant the old one, but encapsulated it. An old sacred landscape remained, but was slowly given a new meaning and a new ideological content.

The second solution was to remove the trees as quickly as possible. When Bishop Gerold of Oldenburg went to the Slavs in 1156 to missionize among the powerful, he and his followers came to a forest, 'the only one in this area, which is totally flat'. In this forest there were sacred oak trees dedicated to the god Proven, surrounding an inner court and an enclosure with two intricately carved gates. The pagans met here for their strange rites every Tuesday, but only the pagan priests were allowed to enter the sacred building. The place was obviously empty when Gerold and his followers passed by, for the bishop dismounted and with his wooden staff broke the doors to the temple. The Christians then entered and collected all the wooden idols and the timber from the building itself around the holy trees and set everything on fire, 'not without fear that we should be detected and attacked by the locals, but we were protected by God'.²² The mission became a success, and after some of the most important leaders had converted, the people followed. They were strongly forbidden in future to swear by trees, springs or stones, but if need be, they could take an oath before an ecclesiastic on iron or on a ploughshare.

Through the building of churches and the Christianizing of trees, the newly conquered land was slowly turned into Christian land and made sacred. Borders between the Christian lands of the new monasteries and those lands that were still

¹⁹ Adam of Bremen, *Adami Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, ed. Bernhard Schmeidler (Hannover, 1917), ch. I.7, p. 9.

²⁰ Adam of Bremen, *Adami Gesta*, ch. IV.26–27, pp. 257–59.

²¹ Henrik Janson, *Templum nobilissimum: Adam af Bremen, Uppsalatemplet och konfliktlinjerne i Europa kring år 1075* (Göteborg, 1998).

²² Helmold of Bosau, pp. 288–90.

heathen were marked out with great care and described in detail in the donation charters. This measuring of land had a very practical purpose in establishing the right of ownership and in marking the boundaries between the jurisdictions of different institutions, but it also had a deeper symbolic meaning. The theological background of such actions derived from descriptions of the measuring of both the earthly and the heavenly Jerusalem in the Old and the New Testaments. By the act of measuring a landscape in the same fashion as the Holy City was measured, the landscape itself was made holy; in the Book of Revelation, the detailed description of the shape and length of Jerusalem is directly connected to the cleansing of the Holy City from the filth of the pagans, as one would clean a bowl and turn it upside down (Rev. 16 and 21). To measure the land of the Wends was thus to make it sacred by pouring out the filth of paganism.

Sacralization of the Crusaders' Homeland

The newly converted land was made sacred, but something similar happened in the crusaders' homelands. Scandinavia provides some interesting examples of a combination of ideology and logistics in the re-ordering of the landscape during the twelfth century.

In general, Western Europe became much more preoccupied ideologically with the city of Jerusalem during the eleventh and twelfth centuries than in the previous period, and the Holy City became physically manifest by a massive importation of objects and ideas related to Jerusalem throughout Western Europe.²³ Relics from Jerusalem were distributed to a great number of churches, cathedrals and prominent monasteries, many of which became centres for the veneration of relics of the True Cross. Round churches were built as replicas of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and the liturgy of the canons of the Holy Sepulchre was adopted by some of the important crusading convents in the West.²⁴ The name of the city of Ringsted, where the crusader kings of Denmark were buried in the later twelfth and the thirteenth centuries, was explained by the monk Robert of Ely writing there by the fact that it is located in the middle of the island of Sjaelland and has the same distance in all directions to the sea, which lies as a ring around Ringsted, so that the city became a miniature copy of Jerusalem at the centre of the world.²⁵ A high point in this importation of Jerusalem was reached in 1215, when during the Fourth Lateran Council, Albert von Buxhövdén, bishop of Riga, successfully claimed that the land of Livonia was the land of the Virgin Mary and of no less

²³ H. E. John Cowdrey, 'The Reform Papacy and the Origin of the Crusades', in *Le concile de Clermont de 1095 et l'appel à la croisade* (Rome, 1997), pp. 65–83.

²⁴ For example, Coimbra in Portugal. See Francisco Marques de Sousa Viterbo, *O mosteiro de Sancta Cruz de Coimbra* (Coimbra, 1914).

²⁵ *Vitae sanctorum Danorum*, p. 240.

religious importance than the land of Her son.²⁶ Thus for the chronicler Henry of Livonia, the missionary fields outside Riga were the land on the other side of the sea, the Outremer of the north.²⁷ Jerusalem and the Holy Land were physically imitated throughout Europe, and the land made sacred in order to prepare Western Europeans for crusading.

Christian lands in Western Europe became small copies of Jerusalem and of the Holy Land, and in a contemporary understanding which was so dependent upon a biblical worldview, they were therefore inevitably also understood as lands of tribulation and sorrows, of the battle between good and evil. The Danish chronicler Saxo, writing around 1200, relates how Denmark was repeatedly attacked by pagan Wends who raided the shores of the islands and killed inhabitants or enslaved them, so that one third of the country lay waste and deserted, until King Valdemar became king and saved the *patria*, the fatherland.²⁸ For Saxo, the *patria* meant Denmark, but it also had exactly the opposite meaning: the promised land far from where one had been born, the true fatherland in Jerusalem or in heaven; in short, it was the land where a true Christian and a true crusader would go and fight, as, for example, it was used for the Holy Land by Pope Urban II.²⁹

Saxo's narrative has always been understood in a very practical sense: the 'deserted land' has been interpreted simply as land without peasants to till the soil. However, there are other possible interpretations of his words. The desert is the 'wilderness and the solitary place, that shall blossom as the rose' (Isaiah 35.1); from the unfertile land shall spring forth water; and in the desert the 'people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined' (Isaiah 9.2) when He comes, who is the 'Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace' (Isaiah 9.6). These are some of the connotations of the word 'desert'. In Isaiah, the Psalms and Exodus, the wandering in the desert is a typological description of the chosen people's slow movement towards God in Christ, and of each individual Christian's search for the way to God. In Saxo, the hardships all point towards liberation in the figure of King Valdemar. When Saxo claimed that Denmark had been made a desert by pagan attack, he was attempting to depict the entire country as a sacred landscape that was awaiting its saviour: the king.

²⁶ Henry of Livonia, *Heinrichs Livländische Chronik*, ed. Leonid Arbusow and Albert Bauer, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi*, 31 (Hannover, 1955), ch. XIX.7, p. 132.

²⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIX.7, p. 132. Henry mentions the crossing of the sea or the perils of the sea as the beginning of several of his descriptions of crusades to Livonia throughout his narrative.

²⁸ Saxo, 2: 204. For *patria*, see Ernst Kantorowitz, *Mourir pour la patrie et autres texts* (Paris, 1984).

²⁹ According to William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum*, ed. R.A.B. Mynors, Rodney M. Thomson and Michael Winterbottom, 2 vols (Oxford, 1998), 1: 604–6.

At the same time, crusading countries were organized for religious wars in practical ways, with the establishment of town militias, the building of castles, the provision of regular crusade sermons and use of indulgences and regular taxation to secure the necessary economic resources. An interesting example in this context is the Scandinavian system of naval conscription of an entire country, known as *expeditio* in Latin or *lething* in the vernacular.³⁰ Discussions about the age and the precise organization of the *lething* can easily become very technical, but in this context a basic outline of the institution must suffice. In its fully developed form that is known from the thirteenth century, the whole country was divided into units called *naves* (ships), each of which had to provide an actual ship for the *lething*. Numbers are uncertain, but the whole of medieval Denmark could probably mobilize some 1200–1500 ships through this system. Each ship unit was subdivided into forty-two harbours, each of which was to provide a warrior to man the ship, and the owners of land in each harbour had to fight personally in turn, normally every third year. The ship was led by a steersman (Lat. *gubernator*), who was a mounted warrior armed with a crossbow; his arms and horse were to be paid for by the forty-two harbours, which also bore the costs of the construction of the ship itself. There were detailed regulations concerning the provision of food for expeditions, the arms of the warriors and sometimes the length of time that the warriors should serve on the ship.

This form of organization may be very old, and in the case of Denmark it is a natural way of organizing the military service of a country that consists of a great number of islands. There are, however, some good indications that the *lething* was reorganized by the king as a result of crusading, or at least, that around 1100 its purpose was understood from a new perspective. One argument is the word itself, *lething*, which is explained and translated in contemporary sources by the Latin *expeditio*, one of the most common words for crusade in the twelfth century. Saxo uses the word *expeditio* ninety-three times in the whole of his voluminous narrative; however, he uses it only five times for the period before the year 1000, which covers about half of his book, and eighty times for the period from 1130 up to the end. The word *expeditio* was clearly a contemporary and technical term to Saxo, and it was used especially for the wars that were fought by his great hero, King Valdemar I. The most suitable translation of *lething* in this context is therefore a crusade that was fought by mobilizing the entire country. This is a disputable translation, because some sources have been interpreted to suggest that the *lething* was used only for defence,³¹ but I would argue that the difficulties arise from a poor and simplified understanding of medieval language. *Defensio* in medieval sources meant defence, which in practice could often mean attack. To defend a Christian country meant to attack the heathens, and all attacks against

³⁰ Described in Danish and other Scandinavian provincial laws, e.g. from 1241: *Den Jyske Lov*, ed. and trans. Peter Skautrup (Århus, 1941).

³¹ As argued strongly by Niels Lund, *Lith, Leding og Landeværn: Hær og samfund i Danmark i ældre middelalder* (Roskilde, 1996).

the heathens had to be justified as defence, according to the theories of just war prevalent at the time.

What did the *lething* mean for the organization of the landscape? In recent years, scholars of toponymy have directed their attention towards a great number of placenames in Scandinavia which contain the Nordic word *snekke*, 'warship'.³² They claim that these names are not older than 1100, and when they are plotted on a map, they show a remarkably even distribution throughout Denmark, Sweden and to some extent also western Norway, and they are normally situated near some stream that gave access to the sea. The most obvious conclusion is that these names indicate the places where the crusader ship of the local *navis* was kept during winter, where the local community met and maintained the ship and made it ready for battle, and probably also the place where the forty-two warriors were to meet before setting out on crusade.

If this conclusion is valid, it reflects a crusading society which had met the logistic problems of warfare by delegating the equipping and maintenance of war material to a local level, but still keeping it under firm royal control through the steersmen, the king's local representatives. However, it also reflects a thorough sacralization of the Scandinavian landscape. Local communities would never be more than a few kilometres from their own crusading ship; they would see it frequently and be reminded that it might soon be their turn again to join a crusade against the heathens. Through this organization they were reminded on a daily basis of the necessity of fighting against evil to create peace. The country itself was sacralized and turned into a permanently mobilized war machine to fight for truth. Ideology and practice were not two mutually exclusive terms, but acted together. Any practical military or religious institution would inevitably have to be located physically in the landscape. At the same time, it would express a deep symbolic meaning, which was obvious to medieval man, and which aimed at creating sacred space, both in the homelands of the crusaders and in the area that they had conquered and were beginning to convert.

³² B. Holmberg and J. Skamby Madsen, 'Da kom en snekke ... Havnepladser fra 1000- og 1100-tallet?', *KUML* (1997–98), 197–225.

Chapter 8

How to Convert a Landscape: Henry of Livonia and the *Chronicon Livoniae*

Carsten Selch Jensen

One of the most important sources regarding the early process of conquest and Christianization in the territory of modern Latvia and Estonia is the so-called *Chronicon Livoniae*, written by a German priest named Henry who worked as a missionary and parish priest in what was then called Livonia, under the auspices of Albert von Buxhövden, bishop of Riga, in the first decades of the thirteenth century. It is believed that Henry began writing sometime around 1208, but the entire chronicle was not finished until around 1226 or 1227.¹ The chronicle describes, often in great detail, how secular lords, crusaders and clerics conquered new lands and subjugated the local people to the Christian faith, expanding the frontiers of Christendom even further through the establishment of new political, military and religious centres of power in these new frontier societies.

The First Missionaries in Livonia

According to the *Chronicon Livoniae* the process of Christianization and conquest among the peoples of the eastern Baltic region was initiated by German and Danish secular and ecclesiastical powers in the final quarter of the twelfth century and the early decades of the thirteenth. The first missionary to settle in Livonia was a German cleric by the name of Meinhard, who had been an Augustinian canon in the monastery of Segeberg in Holstein before he committed himself (around 1184) to missionary work among the Livs, one of the pagan ethnic groups living along the river Dūna (mod. Daugava/Zapadnaya Dvina) in the territory of modern Latvia.²

Within the first few years of his stay in Livonia Meinhard began the construction of a fortified church at Üxküll (mod. Ikšķile, Latvia), which became the seat of the

¹ John H. Lind, Carsten Selch Jensen, Kurt Villads Jensen and Ane L. Bysted, *Danske Korstog. Krig og Mission i Østersøen* (København, 2004), p. 160. A translation of this book into English is forthcoming, planned for publication in 2009.

² Henry of Livonia, *Heinrici Chronicon Livoniae*, ed. and trans. Leonid Arbusow and Albert Bauer, *Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters: Freiherr vom Stein-Gedächtnisausgabe*, 24 (Darmstadt, 1959), ch. I.1–14, pp. 2–10. Unless otherwise indicated, English translations of Henry's chronicle in this chapter are taken from *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia: Henricus Lettus*, trans. James A. Brundage, 2nd edn (New York, 2003).

first episcopal see of the region in 1186 when Meinhard was appointed bishop by Hartwig II, archbishop of Bremen (1184–1207). Soon afterwards, another fortified church was built at Holme, situated on the island of Martinsholm (mod. Mārtiņsala, Latvia) in the Dūna. We also know that Üxküll at least was manned by a small garrison of armed men loyal to Meinhard who were ready to defend the place against any attacking enemy, as would have been the case almost immediately after its construction had been completed.³ Both of these churches formed a part of a bargain between Meinhard and the local pagan Livs, who were to accept Christianity in return for the security offered by these two fortified churches.⁴

As centres of power offering protection to both the newly converted Livs and the clerics living there, both Üxküll and Holme were clearly intended to be bases for future missionary work and colonization in the region. Meinhard seems to have been proved wrong in the location of his episcopal see when Üxküll turned out to be too difficult to defend and support from a military point of view, since the village was located too far upstream from the coast. However, the underlying idea of creating centres of power was very similar to what was the norm in other frontier societies of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, when new regions were conquered and missionary activities commenced. As such, these centres of power were essential to the continual survival of colonists and missionaries on the frontiers of Christianity, as has been pointed out by a great many scholars.⁵ Furthermore the establishment of such secular and religious institutions helps us to understand how political, military and even religious power existed and was exercised in frontier societies with few or no fixed boundaries.

It is important to notice that for people like Henry of Livonia the conquest and colonization of these regions was first and foremost a battle between Christianity and paganism, a battle that was often expressed in the notion of a godly peace that could either be rejected or accepted by those who encountered the missionaries and crusaders from the West. At the same time Henry describes how this acceptance of Christianity was followed by a conversion not only of the pagan people but of the physical landscape of the region. A pagan geography had to be converted into a Christian geography in order to create new religious centres of power, in a way that was not dissimilar to the political and military centres found in other frontier societies.

³ Henry of Livonia, ch. I.6, p. 4; Carsten Selch Jensen, 'The Nature of the Early Missionary Activities and Crusades in Livonia, 1185–1201', in *Medieval Spirituality in Scandinavia and Europe: A Collection of Essays in Honour of Tore Nyberg*, ed. Lars Bisgaard, Carsten Selch Jensen, Kurt Villads Jensen and John H. Lind (Odense, 2001), pp. 121–37 (here 127).

⁴ Henry of Livonia, ch. I.6–7, pp. 4–6.

⁵ With regard to the eastern Baltic region and the importance of towns there, see Robert Bartlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change 950–1350* (London, 1993).

This important process of converting the physical world is described in various ways in the chronicle of Henry of Livonia as a part of a general notion of living in a frontier society, which becomes especially clear if we examine how Henry describes the founding of Riga, the martyrdom of several individuals of the young Livonian Church and the role played by the Virgin Mary in the process of Christianization, all of which will be discussed in this chapter.

Political and Religious Power Bases in the Frontier Societies

Before we examine these examples in detail, it is important to reflect on how power was exercised in the Middle Ages, especially in the frontier societies found in the Holy Land, the Iberian Peninsula and, of course, in the Baltic lands. These societies and the institutions within them were often based on various centres of power rather than on political, military or even religious entities with fixed boundaries in any modern sense of that term, as has been pointed out by Ronnie Ellenblum, one of several medievalists who have discussed a frequent discrepancy between modern concepts of linear boundaries in relation to the exercise of political and military power and the medieval concept of power as being defined by a centre rather than a more or less arbitrary line in the landscape.⁶ In modern times boundary lines are quite clearly of great importance to our understanding of the relationship between sovereign states, since disputes over borders have often resulted in diplomatic crises, violent conflicts and even full-scale wars. Yet this way of thinking is very much a modern phenomenon, depending on our ability to ‘map the world’ so to speak, and is a consequence of the so-called ‘cartographic revolution’ which occurred around 1600 or perhaps somewhat later.⁷ Moreover, it seems as if these modern perceptions of borders and borderlines have somewhat blurred our attempts to understand how power was exercised in the Middle Ages, not least in those regions associated with the crusading movement, notably the Holy Land and the Iberian Peninsula.⁸ By contrast, Ellenblum points out that ‘it

⁶ For a discussion of these matters, see Ronnie Ellenblum, ‘Were there Borders and Borderlines in the Middle Ages? The Example of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem’, in *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices*, ed. David Abulafia and Nora Berend (Aldershot 2002), pp. 105–20.

⁷ This cartographic revolution has been dated differently in various scholarly works, as shown by Ellenblum, ‘Were there Borders?’, especially p. 118. See also Ronnie Ellenblum, *Crusader Castles and Modern Histories* (Cambridge, 2007), which further develops ideas on the medieval concepts of borders, frontiers and centres (chapter 9). For an early beginning of this cartographic revolution, see also Nora Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom: Jews, Muslims and ‘Pagans’ in Medieval Hungary, c. 1000–c. 1300* (Cambridge, 2001), especially pp. 6–17.

⁸ For examples, see *Medieval Frontier Societies*, ed. Robert Bartlett and Angus Mackay (Oxford, 1996); *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices*; Norman Housley,

was never obvious where a certain right ceased to be recognized, because the orientation was not linear but concentric, and it was definitely not homogeneous in space'.⁹ Using the situation in the Holy Land as an example, Ellenblum points out that local Frankish knights never mentioned the borders of occupation when they were referring to political or military power in a certain region; on the contrary, they always referred to centres of power, whether a castle, a fortified city or such like. Thus, the idea of power was often not defined through fixed boundaries, but rather through centres from which power reached out in the form of concentric circles.¹⁰ That is not to say that fixed linear boundaries were totally absent from the medieval world with regard to the upholding of institutional or individual rights and the exercise of political or ecclesiastical power. On the contrary, we often find very precise designations of border markers on the ground in the sources, especially between secular estates, monasteries and on a larger scale, between dioceses, to mention only a few examples.¹¹ Thus, according to Nora Berend, zonal and linear frontiers 'often coexisted and served different ends' in the Middle Ages.¹²

These observations are also applicable to other frontier societies, not least with regard to the Baltic region, where we find examples of both linear and zonal borders in sources like the *Chronicon Livoniae* and other similar texts. More often than not, however, the attention of the authors of these sources was focused on castles and fortified towns as centres of power, rather than on ill-defined and more or less imagined boundaries in the landscape that did not possess any practical influence on the process of conquest and colonization or, on a more general level, in the exercise of power; an obvious example is the case of the fortified churches of Üxküll and Holme. The same is true when the sources are referring to religious power in the process of Christianization. To illustrate this, one may turn to another interesting example from the chronicle of Henry of Livonia that is found towards the end of the text when Henry tells the story of the arrival of the papal legate William, bishop of Modena. This particular event may be the actual reason behind the entire chronicle: to present to the legate a short history of the Church of Riga over a period of four decades. In the chronicle the story goes like this:

In that same year [1225] the venerable Bishop of Riga sent his priest Maurice to the Roman court to ask the Apostolic See for a legate to Livonia. The Supreme Pontiff agreed and sent the venerable Bishop of Modena, the Chancellor of his palace, with that same priest back to Livonia. He came to the Dvina with his

'Frontier Societies and Crusading in the Late Middle Ages', *Mediterranean Historical Review* 10 (1995), 104–19; *The European Frontier: Clashes and Compromises in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jörn Staecker (Lund, 2004).

⁹ Ellenblum, 'Were there Borders?', p. 112. Repeated in Ellenblum, *Crusader Castles*, p. 134.

¹⁰ Ellenblum, 'Were there Borders?', p. 113.

¹¹ Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom*, p. 14; Ellenblum, *Crusader Castles*, p. 133.

¹² Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom*, p. 14.

household, pilgrims, and his whole retinue. The Rigans went out to meet him, received him, and with great joy led him into the city. He rejoiced with them and extolled Jesus Christ, because he found that God's vineyard was so gloriously planted, that the church was watered with the blood of so many of the faithful, and that it had grown so much and so far that its branches extended for a ten-day journey, as far as Reval, or, in another direction, it spread out equally far to Pskov, or, along the Dvina, as far as Gerzika, and now had five separate Bishoprics with their Bishops. He sent his messengers at once back to the Roman court and wrote to the Supreme Pontiff about the true state of affairs.¹³

In these few lines Henry of Livonia gives his account of how far he thought the power of the Church extended out in this once pagan land. People had been baptized and had also, at least formally, accepted Christianity. Churches had been built throughout the provinces and as a consequence pagan temples had been destroyed (although this is not mentioned in the text). This had not been achieved without the spilling of blood, both in battle and through martyrdom. Henry's description is based not on fixed boundaries, but on one particular centre of power: the very heart of the Church in Livonia, namely the city of Riga, from which the power of the Church reached out and covered all the lands as far as a ten-day journey in every direction.

Now, it is interesting to note that Henry is not primarily talking about political or military power in this short passage. Rather, he is referring to the power of the Church or, perhaps to be more precise, to the power of God in the sense of His eternal peace, as stated in the chronicle.¹⁴ From this it becomes clear that these centres of power, like those referred to by Ellenblum and Berend, not only had to do with political or military dominance, but were equally significant with regard to the spiritual power of the Church in the process of Christianization, and are thus important to our understanding of how not only peoples but entire physical landscapes were Christianized and formerly pagan geographies turned

¹³ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIX.2, p. 316: *Eodem anno miserat venerabilis Rigensis episcopus Mauritium, sacerdotem suum, in curiam Romanam, petere sedis apostolice legatum in Lyvoniam. Et annuit summus pontifex petitioni ipsius et misit venerabilem Mutinensem episcopum, palatii sui cancellarium, cum eodem sacerdote in Lyvoniam, et venit cum familia sua et peregrines et cum universo comitatu suo in Dunam. Et occurrerunt ei Rigenses, excipientes eum et cum gaudio magno deducentes eum in civitatem. Congaudebat simul et ipse et collaudabat Iesum Christum, eo quod vineam Dei tam gloriose plantatam et ecclesiam fidelium sanguine multorum irrigatam et tantam et in tantum dilatatam invenit, ut ramos suos ad decem dietas usque in Revelis extenderet vel alia via in Plescekowe vel iuxta Dunam usque Gerceke totidem alias dietas se dilataret, que et episcopatus quinque iam distinctos cum episcopis suis haberet. Et statim remisit nuncios suos in curiam Romanam, rerum veritatem summo pontifici rescribendo* (trans. Brundage, pp. 229–30).

¹⁴ The concept of 'peace' and 'peace of God' is often associated with the adoption of proper Christian rites by the former pagans. As an example see Henry of Livonia, ch. XI.6, pp. 76–78.

into Christian geographies through the establishment of (often fortified) churches, shrines, graveyards and other places of Christian worship and spiritual power at the expense of the former pagan sanctuaries and cultic sites.

Turning a Pagan Geography into a Christian Geography: The Physical World and the Process of Christianization

In an informative article published in 1997, John M. Howe pointed out that ‘medieval people expressed ideas concretely in gestures, images and physical structures. In churches, shrines and sacred places Western European churchmen made the Kingdom of God immanent to their congregations – and to themselves.’¹⁵ In this way a genuine Christian geography was established within Christendom, resembling those ritual landscapes that can be found in any given society from prehistoric times through to the Middle Ages and beyond, including the eastern Baltic Lands.¹⁶

When the first missionaries arrived in Livonia in the mid-1180s they knew that they would encounter a pagan population. They also knew that they were encountering a landscape that was not as empty as it might seem at first. The local tribes had places of worship associated with their religious beliefs; thus Livonia had its own powerful pagan geography that had to be confronted by the Christian missionaries and eventually converted and transformed into a genuine Christian geography, as had been the case throughout the history of the Church wherever Christianity prevailed.¹⁷ In the thinking of ecclesiastical leaders this Christianization of the physical world had always been as important as the actual conversion of large groups of people. The formal adoption of Christianity, whether

¹⁵ John M. Howe, ‘The Conversion of the Physical World: The Creation of a Christian Landscape’, in *Varieties of Religious Conversion in the Middle Ages*, ed. James K. Muldoon (Gainesville, Fla., 1997), pp. 63–78 (here 71).

¹⁶ David Stocker and Paul Everson, ‘The Straight and Narrow Way, Fenland Causeways and the Conversion of the Landscape in the Witham Valley, Lincolnshire’, in *The Cross goes North: Processes of Conversion in Northern Europe, AD 300–1300*, ed. Martin Carver (Woodbridge, 2003), pp. 271–88 (here 272); Sam Turner, ‘Making a Christian Landscape. Early Medieval Cornwall’, in *The Cross goes North*, pp. 171–94 (here 187). This entire volume edited by Martin Carver is essential to this discussion on the conversion of a physical landscape.

¹⁷ Robert Bartlett, ‘The Conversion of a Pagan Society in the Middle Ages’, *History* 229 (1985), 185–201 (here 197); Anselm Weiss, ‘Mythologie und Religiosität der alten Liven’, in *Gli Inizi del Cristianesimo in Livonia-Lettonia: Atti del Colloquio internazionale di storia ecclesiastica in occasione dell’VIII centenario della Chiesa in Livonia (1186–1986), Roma 24–25 giugno 1986*, ed. Michele Maccarrone (Roma, 1989), pp. 81–96; Heiki Valk, ‘Christianisation in Estonia: A Process of Dual-Faith and Syncretism’, in *The Cross goes North*, pp. 571–80 (here 572–73). See also Stocker and Everson, ‘The Straight and Narrow Way’, pp. 271–72 and 276.

it was voluntary or by the use of force, had to be followed by a transformation of former pagan sacred places into places of Christian worship.¹⁸ Alternatively, pagan holy places were destroyed to ensure a radical break with the worldview of the pagan past, although it would seem that this was often in vain, as the old beliefs were not so easily rooted out.¹⁹ In either case one can rightfully argue that the conversion of large numbers of people in Late Antiquity and particularly in the early Middle Ages would require a redefinition of the entire physical landscape in accordance with the new dominant religious beliefs.²⁰ It was also a process that would continue throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries when new territories were conquered and eventually Christianized; thus in the words of Howe, 'sacred space in the medieval Latin West continued to develop as internal and external frontiers were converted into Christian territory'.²¹

Even though it has been said that Christianity was in essence independent of physical locations in its doctrinal beliefs, scholars have rightly argued that Christianity has always had a sacred geography of its own with a variety of holy places which had great importance to local congregations.²² The emergence of these places was dictated by history through a wide range of circumstances, most obviously with regard to the Holy Land itself, but also in other places when, for example, ordinary burial grounds and places of martyrdom were turned into sacred places by the local Christians for the veneration of martyr saints as a part of their devotional life. Another important part of this process was the construction of churches and the establishment of a parish organization, which linked ordinary people with these new sacred landscapes, orienting them towards their local church with its rites and sacraments intended to support the congregation.²³

Such developments also occurred in medieval Livonia. According to the chronicle of Henry, churches were built wherever the clerics succeeded in baptizing some of the local population and eventually large parts of the region were divided into parishes, a process that was completed in southern Livonia in 1206–7 following the visit to Riga of Anders Sunesen, archbishop of Lund.²⁴ This process

¹⁸ Stocker and Everson, 'The Straight and Narrow Way', p. 284.

¹⁹ Bartlett, 'Conversion of a Pagan Society', p. 197. Heiki Valk, 'Christian and Non-Christian Holy Sites in Medieval Estonia: A Reflection of Ecclesiastical Attitudes towards Popular Religion', in *The European Frontier*, pp. 299–310; see also Valk, 'Christianisation in Estonia'.

²⁰ Stocker and Everson, 'The Straight and Narrow Way', pp. 272 and 284.

²¹ Howe, 'Conversion of the Physical World', p. 63.

²² Howe, 'Conversion of the Physical World', p. 64. See also Turner, 'Making a Christian Landscape'; Susan M. Pearce, 'Processes of Conversion in North-West Roman Gaul', in *The Cross goes North*, pp. 61–78.

²³ Pearce, 'Processes of Conversion', pp. 62 and 71–72; Howe, 'Conversion of the Physical World', p. 64.

²⁴ Henry of Livonia, ch. X.13, pp. 60–62. See also Valk, 'Christianisation in Estonia', p. 572.

was repeated in the provinces of Estonia, often in competition against clerics from the Danish Church, in which a large wooden cross was erected in each village and a few locals baptized before the clerics moved on to the next village, evidently not spending much time on the doctrinal instruction of the local population.²⁵

Fundamental to the founding of a new church in Livonia was the consecration of new cemeteries and the process of persuading the locals to give up their ancient pagan burial grounds and the widespread practice of burning their dead, although this was a slow process. Henry tells how Estonians who had been buried in the Christian manner were exhumed and cremated by their relatives in accordance with their old traditions, while not even the most prominent chiefs among the Livs, who had been among the first to accept Christianity, seem to have been prepared to give up their ancient burial practices and thus continued to cremate their dead in a rather syncretistic way.²⁶ In the early thirteenth century the Church seems to have accepted that the newly converted among the Livonians could continue to use the traditional local burial places when caring for their dead, simply because the churches and churchyards were too few and located too far away from many of the settlements in the region.²⁷

Apart from the formal and institutionalized sacred landscape of the Church, centred on churches, parishes and in some cases on burial grounds, there was also a pagan geography based on the landscape itself. This pagan geography was based on holy groves, ponds and springs obviously originating in a pre-Christian context.²⁸ For the same reason, the missionaries of the Christian Church believed these places to be the home of demons and therefore regarded them as highly dangerous to the spiritual well-being of ordinary people, not least the newly converted in a particular region. These places had to be turned into places of Christian worship, that is, converted and Christianized.²⁹ This happened in Livonia, even though such conversions of the physical landscape often took a long time to accomplish. It

²⁵ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIV.2, p. 256. For similar 'rough' markings in the landscape found in other localities during times of Christianization, see Kurt Villads Jensen, 'Korstog og kolonisering. Ideologi og praksis i skandinaviske krige i høymiddelalderen', in *Krigføring i middelalderen: Strategi, ideologi og organisasjon ca. 1100–1400*, ed. Knut Peter Lyche Arstad (Oslo, 2003), pp. 129–46 (here 141–42); Turner, 'Making a Christian Landscape', p. 176.

²⁶ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXVI.8, pp. 286–88. Caupo, who was one of the first to accept baptism and even visited the pope in Rome, was cremated after he was killed during a campaign in 1217: Henry of Livonia, ch. XXI.4, p. 214.

²⁷ Heiki Valk, 'Christianization and Changes in Faith in the Burial Traditions of Estonia in the 11th–17th Centuries A.D.', in *Rom und Byzanz im Norden: Mission und Glaubenswechsel im Ostseeraum während des 8.–14. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Michael Müller-Wille, 2 vols (Stuttgart, 1998), 2: 37–56 (here 48–49); Valk, 'Christianisation in Estonia', p. 572.

²⁸ Howe, 'Conversion of the Physical World', p. 66; Valk, 'Christianisation in Estonia', pp. 572–74.

²⁹ Howe, 'Conversion of the Physical World', pp. 66–67.

seems that the places associated with the major pagan deities were targeted first by the Christian missionaries, whereas the minor places associated with the lesser deities survived the initial phase of Christianization to live on for centuries as part of the overall religious beliefs of the local population.³⁰ Even in the chronicle of Henry of Livonia we can see traces of this ambiguous approach towards the local pagan deities among the missionaries, as we shall see.

Henry of Livonia gives several pieces of information regarding the religious beliefs of the tribes in the region, in which prayers, sacrifices and magical rites seem to have played an important role. Animals as well as humans were sacrificed to the gods; human sacrifice often followed torture of the intended victims, who were frequently selected from among Christians who had been taken captive. Omens seem also to have played an important part in pagan religious beliefs, with the casting of lots seen as a way of deciding on a particular choice of action.³¹ As already mentioned, pagan religion also had its sacred places in nature. Henry describes how in the winter of 1220 an army of Livs, Letts and Germans, presumably under the leadership of Master Volkwin of the Sword Brethren, attacked marauding islanders from Ösel (mod. Saaremaa, Estonia) in the province of Jerwia, and fought a fierce battle near a village called Kareda. The chronicle describes how the Germans pursued the defeated Oselians across the fields into a nearby sacred grove. When describing how the German knights caught up with the fleeing Oselians there, Henry states that this sacred place became smeared with the blood of those killed by the Christians and thus apparently became desecrated.³² Henry does not go into any further details concerning this particular pagan sanctuary, but explains in a later passage that clerics from the Church of Riga encountered another sacred grove further north, not far from the Estonian province of Vironia. In the nearby villages the clerics were told that the grove was believed to be the birthplace of the supreme god of the Oselians, who was named *Tharapita*.³³ Apparently Henry was one of the clerics mentioned in the text, and he goes on to describe how he himself entered the grove and found several idols representing the pagan god. When the idols were torn down and destroyed, the locals were shocked to realize that they did not shed blood.³⁴

A third reference to a genuine pagan geography is found in the part of the chronicle that refers to the visit of the Danish archbishop Anders Sunesen, which is said to have been followed by the conversion of all of Livonia. Henry tells a story about a fellow cleric named Daniel who had taken upon himself the task of preaching and baptizing the people in a village named Siggund (mod. Sidgunda, Latvia) some 50 km east of Riga. After his initial preaching, one of the natives

³⁰ Valk, 'Christianisation in Estonia', p. 576.

³¹ Weiss, 'Mythologie und Religiosität', p. 81–96; Valk, 'Christianisation in Estonia', p. 572.

³² Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIII.9, p. 248.

³³ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIV.5, p. 262.

³⁴ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIV.5, p. 262.

came to Daniel, apparently in a state of great fear. In a nearby wood he claimed to have encountered one of the local pagan gods in the form of a carved idol in a tree-trunk; this god had warned him about a threatened attack by marauding Lithuanians that was to take place the next day.³⁵ Quite obviously the wood must have been a sacred grove very much like the ones that were encountered further to the north at a later stage in the process of Christianization. The strange thing is that Henry continues his story by telling how Daniel immediately dismissed the warnings of this native. Not because he (or Henry for that matter) doubted that the demons were real and could predict the future or even play a part in the spiritual struggle between paganism and Christianity.³⁶ On the contrary, they both seemed convinced that demons were in fact roaming the nearby sacred grove, as stated by the natives as was the case on other occasions. When Daniel did dismiss the warnings it was because he knew that they could not be true because the incident happened during springtime and, according to Henry, it was well known that the Lithuanians hardly ever attacked during this time of the year. Yet, had the warning by the pagan god been given during the winter, Daniel might have chosen to take it seriously because the winter was the favoured time for raids in these parts of the world. As it was, the warning proved to be false and no Lithuanians attacked the village during the next days. Thus Daniel, in the words of Henry, used the incident in his pastoral work to prove that the pagan gods were deceitful demons trying to lure the locals away from Christianity.³⁷ On a more general level this story also illustrates the point that the major pagan deities were systematically rooted out by the missionaries, whereas the lesser deities were left 'alive', so to speak, forming a part of a demonized spiritual world in opposition to, or alongside Christianity.³⁸

These examples from the chronicle show how the clerics and missionaries encountered a pagan geography that in their way of thinking had to be converted into a Christian geography with new centres of power that would support the Christian faith and thus expand the mental and religious frontiers even further into enemy territory. These proceedings become even clearer when we examine how Henry portrays Riga as a part of the establishment of a Christian geography in thirteenth-century Livonia.

Churches were built from the very beginning of the process of Christianization, and thus helped to create new religious centres, some of them even serving the double purpose of representing both a powerful religion and an equally powerful military force, as was the case with the fortified churches of Üxküll and Holme. Along with these churches came the parishes and cemeteries mentioned by Henry, which institutionalized the process of conversion in accordance with the laws of

³⁵ Henry of Livonia, ch. X.14, p. 64.

³⁶ See also Rasa Mažeika, 'Granting Power to Enemy Gods in the Chronicles of the Baltic Crusades', in *Medieval Frontiers*, pp. 153–72.

³⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. X.14, p. 64.

³⁸ Valk, 'Christianisation in Estonia', pp. 573–74.

the Church.³⁹ In the eyes of Henry there was, however, one location that surpassed all other with regards to spiritual power: that was the city of Riga with all its ecclesiastical institutions. Üxküll had been the first bishopric of the Livonian Church, but not for long. In 1201 Bishop Albert founded Riga as a new secular and ecclesiastical centre which was further down the River Düna and much closer to the sea. Riga soon became the most important town in the region in economic, military and religious terms. It soon reached an impressive size, with strong walls and many ecclesiastical institutions to support the process of Christianization; thus a new cathedral church was built between 1201 and 1210 together with housing for the bishop and the clerics of the chapter (both the cathedral and the housing were relocated and rebuilt within a decade), as well as a fortified house and chapel for the Sword Brethren (see below). The people of Riga also needed a parish church of their own: this was the church of St Peter, first mentioned in 1209.⁴⁰ Furthermore, in the vicinity of Riga the Cistercian monastery of Dünamunde had been founded in 1205 and in 1210 Bishop Albert decided that the chapter of the cathedral should be handed over to the order of the Premonstratensians who also gained permission to build a monastery. And in the 1220s even more churches and monasteries were added, thus enhancing the strength of this new ecclesiastical centre even more.⁴¹

In the view of Henry, Riga had a profound spiritual significance for the colonists and crusaders in the region. The city had been founded on the exact location of the first major battle between an army of crusaders and the Livs, in which the second bishop of Livonia, Berthold, had been killed.⁴² At the same time Riga functioned as a gate, so to speak, through which clerics and crusaders would pass on their way to Livonia to fulfil their religious vows; as Henry states:

[the city] is irrigated from below for, as they say, it is well moistened in its waters and pastures; or, since the plenary remission of sins is administered in it to sinners, the irrigation from above, that is, the kingdom of heaven is thus administered through it. Or, in other words, Riga, refreshed by the water of the new faith, waters the tribes round about, through the holy font of baptism.⁴³

³⁹ As examples, see Henry of Livonia, ch. I.6–7, pp. 4–6; II.2, pp. 10–12; X.14, p. 64.

⁴⁰ Bernhart Jähnig, 'Die Anfänge der Sakraltopographie von Riga', in *Studien über die Anfänge der Mission in Livland*, ed. Manfred Hellmann (Sigmaringen, 1989), pp. 123–58 (here 133–38); Jensen, 'The Nature of the Early Missionary Activities', pp. 134–35.

⁴¹ Jähnig, 'Die Anfänge der Sakraltopographie von Riga', pp. 141, 144 and 147–57.

⁴² Henry of Livonia, ch. II.5–6, pp. 12–14.

⁴³ Henry of Livonia, ch. IV.5, p. 20: *Irriguum inferius, eo quod sit aquis et pascuis irrigua vel eo quod ministratur in ea peccatoribus plenaria peccaminum remissio et per eam irriguum superius, quod est regnum celorum, per consequens ministratur; vel Riga nova fide rigata et quia per eam gentes in circuitu sacro baptismatis fonte rigantur* (trans. Brundage, p. 37).

Thus Henry describes this newly founded city in highly symbolic terms, portraying it as a font from which the water of baptism should flow into the surrounding countryside.⁴⁴ Henry even goes as far as to call Riga the 'City of God' (Lat. *civitas Dei*).⁴⁵ This expression only occurs once in the entire chronicle, but still gives us an idea of how important Henry considered the foundation of this new city to be in the process of converting the pagans and the entire landscape.⁴⁶

The Creation of a Church of Martyrs

To the people of the Middle Ages the world as a whole, and especially untamed nature, was an ambiguous place to reside in. God had created it all, but at the same time it was a place haunted by the Devil and all his demons. To people like Henry, these demons took the form of local pagan deities. No wonder the converts and the other Christians felt the need for safe zones, that is, sacred places that could offer protection against the evil powers of this world.⁴⁷ This process was instrumental in the conversion of the physical world through the creation of more and more safe zones in an otherwise haunted world. From the earliest times in the history of the Church, martyrdom had been of paramount importance to the creation of these safe sacred zones.⁴⁸ Henry seems to think that *any* Christian killed by the pagans was to be considered a martyr; these 'local' martyrs were thus instrumental in the process of creating new sacred zones in an otherwise pagan landscape.

The first martyr in Livonia mentioned by Henry could hardly have been more prominent, as this was the head of the church, Berthold, former abbot of the Cistercian monastery of Loccum and second bishop of Livonia.⁴⁹ Berthold was the first missionary to bring an army of crusaders with him, although he had visited his new bishopric once without formal support and had been obliged to flee the country when the Livs attempted to kill him during his consecration of a new cemetery in Holme.⁵⁰ During his second visit Berthold was killed in a battle

⁴⁴ This is mentioned again at a later stage in the chronicle: Henry of Livonia, ch. XIX.7.

⁴⁵ Henry of Livonia, ch. IX.4, p. 38.

⁴⁶ Jensen, 'The Nature of the Early Missionary Activities', pp. 134–35; See also Carsten Selch Jensen, 'Urban Life and the Crusades in Northern Germany and the Baltic Lands in the Early Thirteenth Century', in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier 1150–1500*, ed. Alan V. Murray (Aldershot, 2001), pp. 75–94.

⁴⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. X.14, p. 64. Arnold Angenendt, *Geschichte der Religiosität im Mittelalter* (Darmstadt, 1997), p. 203–4.

⁴⁸ Pearce, 'Processes of Conversion', p. 71.

⁴⁹ Henry of Livonia, ch. II.1, p. 12.

⁵⁰ Concerning the question on the use of force in the process of Christianization of Livonia, see Jensen, 'The Nature of the Early Missionary Activities'.

between the Livs and the newly arrived crusaders on 24 July 1198.⁵¹ At first Henry has no references to Berthold being a martyr, but at a later stage in the chronicle he writes about two other martyrs from among the local Livs, Kyrian and Layan, who had been killed by their own kinsmen outside Üxküll when they refused to renounce their Christian beliefs.⁵² It is possible that these two local martyrs from among the newly baptized Livs may be those referred to in the *Chronica Slavorum* by Arnold of Lübeck, who mentions some of the newly baptized who would not abandon their new faith, for which reason they were tortured and killed by their kinsmen, exactly as described in the chronicle of Henry. Arnold even refers to 'their confession' (*sua confessione*) as something that would eventually strengthen their fellow Christians.⁵³ According to Henry, these martyrs were buried in the church of Üxküll next to the burial places of Bishop Meinhard and Bishop Berthold, stating that 'the first of whom was a confessor and the second a martyr as mentioned above'.⁵⁴ We can also find support for the status of Bishop Berthold as martyr in the chronicle of Arnold of Lübeck, who is explicit in referring to Berthold by name and calling him *beatus* when describing his death in battle.⁵⁵ In connection with the visit of William of Modena Henry also states that the legate visited the church of Üxküll to commemorate Meinhard and Berthold, thereby recognizing their holiness.⁵⁶ At a later stage the remains of bishops Meinhard and Berthold were transferred to the new cathedral of Riga, but according to Henry it seems that Üxküll continued to serve as the resting place of the local martyrs Kyrian and Layan, thus continuing to grant spiritual power and security to that particular locality.⁵⁷ The church of Üxküll seems to have been chosen because the

⁵¹ Henry of Livonia, ch. II.6, p. 14.

⁵² Henry of Livonia, ch. X.5, pp. 48–50.

⁵³ Arnold of Lübeck, *Chronica Slavorum*, ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz, *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum* (Hannover, 1868), ch. V.30, p. 216: *Nam cum quidam neophytorum ab inimicis sue gentis comprehensi fuissent, muneribus, blandimentis ad pristinum errorem eos reinvitare satagebant. Quibus cum nulla ratione concentirent, sed suscepte fidei sacramenta inviolabiliter constantissime observare decrevissent, incredibili tormentorum genere eos trucidabant. Qui sua confessione multos confortabant, quia per eos plurimi Deum glorificabant.* I would like to thank Marek Tamm (Tallinn University) for making me aware of this possible reference to Kyrian and Layan in the chronicle of Arnold of Lübeck.

⁵⁴ Henry of Livonia, ch. X.6, p. 50: *quorum primus confessor, secundus martyr, ut supra dictum est* (My translation into English, C.S.J.).

⁵⁵ Arnold of Lübeck, ch. V.30, pp. 214–15.

⁵⁶ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIX.5, p. 322: *ubi primorum sanctorum episcoporum memoriam commemorans.*

⁵⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. X.5–6, pp. 48–50. With regard to the security and protection offered by martyrs' graves, see Pearce, 'Processes of Conversion', pp. 71–72. It is uncertain whether Kyrian and Layan were actually considered official martyrs by the Rigan Church during the following decades and centuries. The same question also applies to a great many of the other martyrs mentioned by Henry in his chronicle.

village had been the home of these two local Christians who had been killed for the sake of their faith.

Henry also mentions some more martyrs who were killed in nearby Holme, three clerics who won eternal life through the palms of martyrdom (*per martyrii palmam ad vitam pervenit eternam*).⁵⁸ One of them is identified by Henry as the priest John, who had originally come from Vironia, and who had been ransomed by Bishop Meinhard years before after he had been carried off as a slave by the Livs. After his release John was sent to Meinhard's home monastery in Segeberg in northern Germany, eventually returning to Livonia in the company of Bishop Albert and becoming a priest at Holme. In contrast to the cases of Kyrian and Layan, John's mutilated body (he had been decapitated and his body torn into pieces) was brought back to Riga where it was buried in the cathedral.⁵⁹ Henry continues his chronicle with more stories of martyrs among the clerics and hermits as well as among the crusaders and the Sword Brethren, thus stressing their importance for the Church of Livonia.⁶⁰ In the year 1219 the region even witnessed the martyrdom of another bishop, when Bishop Theoderic of Estonia was killed during a Danish crusade against the northern provinces of Estonia.⁶¹

These stories of martyrdom in the chronicle of Henry of Livonia help to underline the image of a Church suffering as Christ once had suffered for mankind. Each and every one of these martyrs also helped to create new sacred places in the process of Christianizing the physical world. In the minds of the clerics, no place in Livonia was in itself sacred (in contrast to the beliefs of the local pagan population), but places were *made* sacred (and thus powerful) by the interaction of these holy men who gave their lives as martyrs or became confessors by virtue.⁶² As such they were as important to Henry in his perception of this region as a frontier zone as were the military strongholds and castles that provided centres of power in a concrete sense in this struggle between Christendom and paganism.

The Role of St Mary according to Henry of Livonia

It was not only the many churches and martyrs that supported the Church of Livonia by creating sanctuaries and centres of divine power: the Virgin Mary herself intervened on behalf of her Son, helping those who believed in Him. This

⁵⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. X.7, p. 52.

⁵⁹ Henry of Livonia, ch. X.7, p. 52.

⁶⁰ Martyrs among the clerics, crusaders and Sword Brethren are mentioned by Henry of Livonia several times in his chronicle: ch. IX.12, p.42; XIV.11, p. 126; XV.9, p. 146; XVIII.8, pp. 178–80.

⁶¹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIII.2, p. 232. See also Lind et al., *Danske Korstog*, pp. 208–10.

⁶² Angenendt, *Geschichte der Religiosität*, p. 208; Pearce, 'Processes of Conversion', pp. 62, 71–72.

becomes apparent throughout the chronicle, but especially in connection with the Fourth Lateran Council, held in Rome in 1215. The meeting had been summoned by Pope Innocent III in 1213 and after news of it reached the bishopric of Riga, Bishop Albert together with Bishop Theoderic of Estonia went to Rome to take part.⁶³ In Henry's chronicle we learn that the decisions of this meeting were to have a profound impact on the inner life of the Church and also on the perception of the ongoing crusades, most notably with regard to the recovery of the Holy Land, as Pope Innocent regarded the act of crusading as the most profound expression of faith among individual Christians.⁶⁴

At a time when the papacy wished all efforts to be directed towards the liberation of the Holy Land, some of those engaged in crusading activities elsewhere must have felt a need to emphasize the importance of these places as well. According to Henry of Livonia this was exactly what Bishop Albert did when he informed the pope of the progress of the Church in Livonia:

The Bishop [Albert] reported the troubles, the wars, and the affairs of the Livonian church to the Supreme Pontiff and to all the Bishops. They all rejoiced together over the conversion of the heathens and likewise over the wars and the manifold triumphs of the Christians.

The Bishop spoke: 'Holy Father', he said, 'as you have not ceased to cherish the Holy Land of Jerusalem, the country of the Son, with your Holiness' care, so also you ought not abandon Livonia, the land of the Mother, which has hitherto been among the pagans and far from the cares of your consolation and is now again desolate. For the Son loves His Mother and, as He would not care to lose His own land, so, too, He would not care to endanger His Mother's land.'

The Supreme Pontiff replied and said: 'We shall always be careful to help with the paternal solicitude of our zeal the land of the Mother even as the land of the Son.'⁶⁵

⁶³ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIX.7, p. 196; XVIII.1, p. 170.

⁶⁴ Carsten Selch Jensen, 'Valdemar Sejr, korstogsbevægelsen og den pavelige reformpolitik i 1200-tallets første halvdel', *Historisk Tidsskrift (København)* 102 (2002), 27–31.

⁶⁵ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIX.7, p. 196: *Qui referebant tribulationes et bella et negocia Lyvonensis ecclesie summo pontifici, simul et omnibus episcopis. Et congaudebant omnes de conversione gentium, simul et de bellis et triumphis multiplicibus christianorum. Et ait episcopus: 'Sicut', inquit, 'pater sancte, terram sanctam Ierosolimitanam, que est terra filii, sanctitatis tue studio fovere non desinis, sic Lyvoniā, que est terra matris, consolationum tuarum sollicitudinibus hactenus in gentibus dilatatam eciam hac vice desolatam derelinquere non debes. Diligit enim filius matrem suam, qui, sicut non vult terram suam perdi, sic nec vult terram matris utique periclitari'. Cui respondit summus*

Obviously we do not know whether Albert actually *did* make this speech at the Church council in Rome in 1215, but according to Henry the dedication of all of Livonia to Mary actually pre-dates this event. He states that Albert dedicated Livonia to 'Mary, the most Holy Mother of God' (*beatissime Dei genitricis Marie*) as early as 1203 when the new cathedral of Riga was founded.⁶⁶ Thus from an early stage Mary had played an important part in the history of the Livonian Church, and both these incidents of 1203 and 1215 offer some insights into the ideological and religious ideas underlying the whole concept of a frontier in the chronicle of Henry of Livonia. To Henry this frontier was not simply something organized by man for the sake of war and conquest and to subdue other people, but it was happening because it was the will of God that these pagan lands should become part of Christianity. This notion is developed further at a later stage in the chronicle in which Henry refers to Mary as 'the Star of the Sea' (*maris dicitur stella*). In this specific instance, a representative of King Valdemar II of Denmark (1202–41) had claimed the rights to all of Livonia, apparently without success. This land did not belong to the Danish king but solely to the Mother of God, Henry states, going on to say that the representative of the Danish king was forced to leave the country because he had insulted the Mother of God through his false claims.⁶⁷

Henry then continues the paragraph with praise of Mary, in which he proclaims her protection of all Livonia; she is the Queen of Heaven (*regina celi*) who is more powerful than any of the rulers of this world. He gives numerous examples of how Mary has defeated all those who have opposed the Christians and the Church of Riga; whether these were pagans, the king of Denmark or Russian princes, they were all defeated and brought to their knees, often through the intervention of other powerful rulers in the region who acted as divine instruments in the hands of Mary in the process of fulfilling her will. For example, Henry mentions an unnamed Russian prince who is said to have attacked Livonia, and was consequently killed by the Virgin Mary *per tataros*, that is through the agency of the Mongols. Those who had accepted baptism had also done so under the banner of the Virgin in return for her protection. Henry is so carried away in his praise of Mary that he ends the paragraph with an 'Amen'.⁶⁸

To Henry of Livonia as well as to his contemporaries in the Baltic region, the entrustment of the newly conquered regions to Mary, the Mother of God, was by no means a mere coincidence or something unique to the eastern Baltic region.

pontifex et ait: 'Sicut terram filii, sic et terram matris paterne sollicitudinis nostre studiis semper promovere curabimus' (trans. Brundage, p. 152).

⁶⁶ Henry of Livonia, ch. VI.3, p. 24.

⁶⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXV.2, p. 269. The title applied to Mary is obviously taken from the Hymn *Ave maris stella*. On Henry's bias against the Danish involvement in Livonia, see Lind et al., *Danske Korstog*, p. 160.

⁶⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXV.2, pp. 268, 270. It is not possible to identify for certain the Russian prince of Novgorod mentioned by Henry who was killed by the Mongols. See Anti Selart, *Livland und die Rus' im 13. Jahrhundert* (Böhlau, 2007), especially p. 99.

Rather it was something typical of a frontier society. By dedicating the conquered lands to the Mother of God, Albert and his followers were simply following the ways of other frontier societies at the fringes of Europe. Angus MacKay has even said that 'the late medieval frontier was a Mariological one', in connection with late medieval Spain where Mary evidently ousted such other powerful saints. This meant that all the major churches in the towns throughout the entire frontier zone in Iberia were dedicated to the Virgin Mary, who also took an active part in the actual fighting and reconquest of the former Christian lands.⁶⁹ The situation in thirteenth-century Livonia clearly had some similarities with late medieval Iberia, in that the most important church in the region, the cathedral of Riga, was dedicated to Mary, and scholars have argued that also the first episcopal church built in Üxküll was dedicated to Mary.⁷⁰ Mary also took an active part in the fighting in Livonia, as indicated by Henry, who often refers to Marian banners being carried into battle whenever an army of crusaders and their allies took to the field.⁷¹ Whenever an enemy stronghold was captured, the place was dedicated to Mary through the sprinkling of holy water and the hoisting of a Marian banner at the top of the walls.⁷²

In relation to the veneration of Mary in the frontier society that Henry describes, there is one extremely important institution that has to be singled out for mention. This is the knightly order of the so-called 'Sword Brethren' (Lat. *Fratres militiae Christi*) mentioned repeatedly in the chronicle. According to Henry, the founder of this new order was the aforementioned Theoderic, who later became bishop of Estonia and was killed in the battle of Lyndanisse in 1219. During an absence of Bishop Albert from Riga, Theoderic is said to have founded this new knightly order in 1202. The order was approved by the pope and given the Rule of the Templars, whose garments the Brethren emulated, the only difference being that the red cross of the Templars was replaced by a sword and cross, thus indicating the status of the Brethren as an independent order.⁷³ Like the Templars, they seem to have had a strong devotion towards Mary in their spiritual life, as was later

⁶⁹ Angus MacKay, 'Religion, Culture and Ideology on the Late Medieval Castilian-Granadan Frontier', in *Medieval Frontier Societies*, pp. 217–43 (here 230).

⁷⁰ Henry himself expressively states that the cathedral of Riga was dedicated to Mary, Henry of Livonia, ch. VI.3, p. 24. With regards to the church in Üxküll, see Jähnig, 'Die Anfänge der Sakraltopographie von Riga', p. 128.

⁷¹ References to a banner of the army are found in Henry of Livonia, ch. XI.5, p. 76; XXIII.9, p. 248 and more directly to a Marian banner in ch. XI.6, p. 78; XII.3, p. 88; XXIII.10, p. 252. See also Leonid Arbusow, *Liturgie und Geschichtsschreibung im Mittelalter: In ihren Beziehungen erläutert an den Schriften Ottos von Freising (d. 1158), Heinrichs Livlandschronick (1227), und den anderen Missionsgeschichten des Bremischen Erzsprengels: Rimberts, Adams von Bremen, Helmolds* (Bonn, 1951), p. 65.

⁷² Henry of Livonia, ch. XI.6, p. 78.

⁷³ Henry of Livonia, ch. VI.4, p. 24. See also Jähnig, 'Die Anfänge der Sakraltopographie von Riga', p. 134–35.

the case with the Teutonic Knights, who eventually absorbed the few remaining Sword Brethren in Livonia after their disastrous defeat in the battle of Saule in 1236.⁷⁴ Henry quite clearly regarded the Virgin Mary as essential to the process of creating new sacred centres in Livonia and to the general Christianizing of the landscape as well as of the people living there. Mary was considered the supreme guardian of this new land and took an active part in fighting to protect and enhance the conquered lands, as was the case in other frontier societies.

Conclusions

The concept of frontiers in the chronicle of Henry of Livonia followed the general medieval notions of a frontier that did not have fixed boundaries but was organized around centres of political, military, economic or even religious authority, and from which power extended into the surrounding countryside in the form of concentric circles. In the chronicle the conversion of the physical world, in which a pagan geography was transformed into a Christian geography, is portrayed as being just as important as other aspects of the so-called 'clash of cultures' that took place in these parts of the world in the early thirteenth century as part of the crusading movement. We have to be aware of the fact that military, economic and political engagements were only one aspect of the overall conquest of those regions. At least as important was the transformation of the physical world from paganism to Christianity through which new sacred zones were created by the foundation of a whole range of ecclesiastical institutions and through the intervention of martyrs and heavenly powers. Thus, not only the people, but the entire landscape was a part of the process of Christianization in the Middle Ages, influencing also the general concepts of frontiers and frontier zones in medieval times.

⁷⁴ Lind et al., *Danske Korstog*, chapter 12, p. 274.

Chapter 9

Rural Society and Religious Innovation: Acceptance and Rejection of Catholicism among the Native Inhabitants of Medieval Livonia

Tiina Kala

Introduction

According to the generally accepted view, Christianity was introduced to the native inhabitants of the eastern Baltic lands by force and remained relatively alien to them throughout the period of Catholic domination.¹ Only after the Reformation, and especially during the United Brethren movement of the eighteenth century, did Christianity become more familiar to the Estonian and Latvian population.² The concept of forced Christianization belongs to political history, and is popular with Baltic German and also Estonian and Latvian historiography. Relatively little is known about the attitudes of the local people towards Catholicism from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century, and the Christian religious life of the native population in this period has never been an independent topic of research.

One explanation for this is that sources are scarce. An alternative reason can be found in examples inherited from chroniclers who focused primarily on political history. This not only applies to chroniclers such as Henry of Livonia, the anonymous author of the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* (Ger. *Livländische Reimchronik*), or others who were more or less contemporaries of the events they described. It applies even more to later writers, in the first instance Christian Kelch, whose work had enormous influence on local history writing from the eighteenth

¹ This point of view has penetrated not only the local (i.e. Estonian) popular conception of history, but can also be found over a wider range. See, for example, Marie-Luise Favreau-Lilie, 'Mission to the Heathen in Prussia and Livonia: The Attitudes of the Religious Military Orders toward Christianization', in *Christianizing Peoples and Converting Individuals: Selected Proceedings of the International Medieval Congress, University of Leeds, 14–17 July 1997*, ed. Guyda Armstrong and Ian N. Wood (Turnhout, 2000), pp. 147–54.

² See, for example, Ea Jansen, 'Ilmalik ja kiriklik eesti talurahva maailmavaates XIX sajandil', in *Religiooni ja ateismi ajaloo Eestis*, ed. Jüri Kivimäe, 3 vols (Tallinn, 1987), 3: 192–220 (here 193); Lembit Andresen, *Eesti rahvakooli ja pedagoogika ajalugu*, 4 vols (Tallinn, 1999), 2: 53.

century onward. Whether or not deliberately, he contributed greatly to the forging of the concept of Livonian history as a history of conquest.³

National history writing in Estonia and Latvia, although deeply influenced by Baltic German historiography, has seen its priorities in the formation of national identity. Although many of the folk traditions which have been viewed as being important contributors to this identity actually have their roots in Catholic beliefs, in research, Catholicism has never been permitted a role in the development of national identity.⁴ On the contrary, the rhetoric of the sources often characterizes the local, predominantly rural population as rude in religious matters and prone to pagan habits. Their protests against the ruling class are seen as backsliding from religion. Overinterpretation of such general remarks has thus led to the treatment of paganism as a part of national identity in several Estonian historical and publicist writings ever since the period of national awakening in the second half of the nineteenth century. This chapter aims to analyse the attitudes towards and relationships with the Catholic religion and Church of a society which experienced a relatively late, quick and often violent importation of Christianity. This will be done using the example of the eastern Baltic territories with Estonian, Livish and Lettish populations.

At the end of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth century the ethnic population of the eastern Baltic lands formed an almost exclusively rural society, whose more densely populated centres did not yet have features characteristic of towns.⁵ Both during conversion and later, the Catholic Church had to confront in this environment the same problems it had among the rural population of other parts of Europe: persistence of heathen practices, violation of Christian moral norms, lack of knowledge of basic Christian texts among others. At the same time the agrarian colonization from the Christian West (above all from Germany) that affected much of eastern central Europe never reached this region. As a result, the local society remained relatively closed to any other religious influence, apart from the imported ecclesiastical structures.

Several characteristics such as acceptance or rejection of baptism and other sacraments, or the fulfilment of Christian moral norms and material obligations reflect a more or less formal acceptance of Christianity. The question is whether it is possible to describe the attitudes of local society towards Christian teaching

³ See Christian Kelch, 'Tõlkija eessõna', in *Liivimaa ajalugu*, trans. Ivar Leimus (Tartu, 2004), pp. v–xxiv (here xxii).

⁴ The same trend, although sometimes under slightly different circumstances, can be observed in other Nordic countries. See Yvonne Marie Werner, 'Schwedentum und Katholizismus: Die historischen Wurzeln einer nationalen Antipathie', in *Ab aquilone: Nordic Studies in Honour and Memory of Leonard E. Boyle, OP*, ed. Marie-Louise Rodén (Stockholm, 1999), pp. 181–96.

⁵ See Valter Lang, 'Varalinnalised keskused (aolinnad) hilisumuinaaegses Eestis', in *Kui vana on Tallinn?*, ed. Tiina Kala (Tallinn, 2004), pp. 7–27.

and ideology. Perhaps the main conflict over acceptance or rejection of the new religion always remained a conflict about secular power and material values.

According to sources relating to the spread of Christianity among the pagans of the eastern Baltic land in the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the acceptance of Christianity actually serves as a sign of accepting a new power, a process which can be compared to that of the conquered western Slavic territories. During the earlier phase of the Slavic mission in the tenth and eleventh centuries the majority of the Slavs identified freedom with paganism and submission to Christianity with submission to the Holy Roman Empire.⁶ The second stage of accepting Christianity included not only the following of obligations and norms set for Christians, but also the acceptance of the basics of Christian teaching by a population whose formal membership of Christianity was no longer questioned. During this period it can be clearly deduced from the sources what an image of a good native Christian should be.

The main sources available in this discussion are chronicles (above all, that of Henry of Livonia), statutes of church synods and visitation protocols. The latter date exclusively from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Unfortunately the original church visitation protocols have not survived. Some incomplete copies survive in the registers of one bishopric, Ösel-Wiek. In these records, the property of the parochial churches is described more or less consequently, while matters of religion are less detailed.⁷

Henry of Livonia, although more profound and vivid in his descriptions of the native population than any other chronicler of this period, is selective in his approach, reporting mainly on the events which reflected his own interest and knowledge.⁸ Thus Henry's chronicle is not a systematic overview of the conversion of the territories in question; it only reveals some aspects of this conversion and conveys the attitudes of one particular person – the chronicler.

⁶ Gert Haendler, 'Reichskirche und Mission in der ersten Epoche der Christianisierung Mecklenburgs (bis 1066)', in *Kirche und Gesellschaft im Ostseeraum und im Norden vor der Mitte des 13. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Sven Ekdahl (Visby, 1969), pp. 65–75 (here 69).

⁷ (1) The decisions of the *Landtag* of 1422: *Akten und Recesse der livländischen Ständetage I (1304–1460)*, ed. Oskar Stavenhagen (Riga, 1907), pp. 261–65, no. 299 (28 January 1422). (2) The synod statutes of Riga of 1428 and their additions from 1437: *LUB* 1/7: 470–94, no. 690 (after 6 February 1428); *LUB* 1/9: 81–87, nos 130, 131 (18–25 February 1437). (3) The synodal statutes and visitation protocols of Ösel-Wiek of 1505 and 1517–22: *LUB* 2/2: 599–605, no. 781 (23 June 1505); 'Saare-Lääne visitatsiooniprotokolle aastaist 1519–1522', ed. Evald Blumfeldt, *Ajalooline Ajakiri* 1 (1933), 44–55, 2 (1933), 116–25 and 3 (1933), 160–64. Further details not given in Blumfeldt's edition can be found in MS København, Rigsarkivet, Fremmed proveniens, Lifland, Øsel stift, Registrant 1A, fols 1r–11v (1517), fols 49r–62r (1519–22), and also fols 69r–75r (sine anno): *Ordo ad visitandas Ecclesias parochiales*.

⁸ Henry of Livonia, *Heinrici Chronicon Livoniae*, *Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters: Freiherr vom Stein-Gedächtnisausgabe*, 24, ed. Leonid Arbusow and Albert Bauer (Darmstadt, 1959), p. xxii.

After the formal conversion of the local population, the next evidence concerning their religious beliefs and practices dates from the period two and three hundred years later, when the Catholic Church was undergoing major changes as a result of conciliarism and the growing influence in ecclesiastical affairs of regional secular authorities.⁹ The normative sources of this period describe a minimum of Catholic teaching texts which give some hints about popular beliefs, and allow conclusions to be drawn on what possibilities were created for accepting Christian teaching and moral norms.

Pagan Beliefs and Knowledge of Christianity before the Conquest

The possibilities of determining the religious attitudes of the Estonians, Livs and Lettish peoples before the crusader conquest are limited, as there are no written sources that deal specifically with this subject.¹⁰ There is some mention of individual pagan practices, but no systematic overview of pagan deities and religious practices exists. Henry of Livonia mentions the god of the Oselians, Tharapita,¹¹ wooden sculptures and carvings of the pagan gods, and the wonder of the heathens at the fact that these images did not bleed when cut.¹² In killing Hebbus, the Danish magistrate of Jerwia, and eating his heart, the Estonians of Saccala hoped to acquire strength against the Christians.¹³ Although Henry describes this episode in order to demonstrate the ferocity of the backsliding neophytes, it reveals that the Saccalans held the power of the Christians in high esteem, hoping to gain some of it through this pagan rite. The heathens also did not violate the believed will of their gods, even if it favoured Christians. For example, when the Livs wanted to sacrifice Theoderic, one of the first missionaries, around the year 1186, they cast lots to learn the will of their gods. As a result, it was decided that Theoderic should live. A similar thing happened to the priest Hartwig, whom the Estonians wanted

⁹ See, for example, Isnard Wilhelm Frank, *A History of the Mediaeval Church* (London, 1995), pp. 130–37; also Josef Wohlmuth, ‘Die Konzilien von Konstanz (1414–1418) und Basel (1431–1449)’, in *Geschichte der Konzilien. Vom Nicaenum bis zum Vaticanum II*, ed. Giuseppe Alberigo (Wiesbaden, 1998), pp. 235–87.

¹⁰ The mythology of local ethnic groups has been deeply influenced by Christian religion and modern popular knowledge of it is significantly affected by national romanticism of the nineteenth century. Therefore it is extremely difficult to detect the original heathen tradition from among the layers of folk belief. For Estonian folk beliefs one of the best works is still Ivar Paulson, *The Old Estonian Folk Religion* (Bloomington, Ind., 1971). On the influences of Christianity on Latvian folk beliefs, see P. Schmidt, ‘Die Mythologie der Letten’, in *Die Letten: Aufsätze über Geschichte, Sprache und Kultur der alten Letten*, ed. F. Balodis (Riga, 1930), pp. 192–214.

¹¹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIV.5, p. 262, XXX.5, p. 336.

¹² Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIV.5, p. 262.

¹³ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXVI.6, pp. 284, 286.

to sacrifice to their gods in 1223 and who was also left alive.¹⁴ However, we do not know whether these are authentic stories or only Henry's examples to demonstrate how the Christian God protected his servants from danger.

During the revolt of 1223, the whole of Estonia renounced Christianity and forced the Christians out of the major part of the country. Henry colourfully describes the resumption of pagan rites: the neophytes took back the wives who had been divorced from them after the acceptance of Christianity, they dug out their dead and cremated them according to pagan rites, and cleansed themselves and their houses with water and brushes to get rid of their baptism.¹⁵ The heathen funerals were celebrated with feasting and lamenting.¹⁶ However, some of the descriptions by the chronicler, for example those concerning cremation,¹⁷ do not always accord with archaeological evidence.¹⁸

One of the frequently described pagan rituals is the casting of lots to discover the will of the pagan gods. When the Semgallians were preparing for a campaign to revenge themselves against the Lithuanians, they asked for help from the Rigans, using the positive results of the casting of lots as an argument.¹⁹ The Oselians cast lots to ask their gods whether they should attack the Danes in Revalia or the baptized Jerwians; the gods chose the latter.²⁰ In a similar fashion, the heathen Curonians asked their gods to tell them the most favourable time to attack Riga. According to Henry, the ritual lasted for a whole fortnight.²¹ The heathens were said to sacrifice cattle to their gods to gain their favour. Among the sacrificed domestic animals dogs and billy goats (Lat. *canes et hircos*) – animals of low direct economic value – are mentioned in connection with the Livish stronghold of Sattesele.²²

The sound of the church bell at Riga caused the Curonians to believe that the god of the Christians would devour and destroy them.²³ The idea of devouring is also used as a characteristic of dangerous phenomena on other occasions, for example in the famous episode where the Cistercian priest Theoderic was believed by the Estonians to have eaten up the sun during a solar eclipse.²⁴ Thus it was

¹⁴ Henry of Livonia, ch. I.10, p. 6, XXVI.7, p. 286.

¹⁵ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXVI.8, pp. 286–88.

¹⁶ Henry of Livonia, ch. XII.6, p. 94, XIV.5, p. 114.

¹⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIV.5, p. 114.

¹⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIV.5, p. 114. Inhumation burials had been common in Livonian territories from the tenth century and in western Estonian territories from the twelfth century. See Marika Mägi, *At the Crossroads of Space and Time: Graves, Changing Society and Ideology on Saaremaa (Ösel), 9th–13th centuries AD* (Tallinn, 2002), p. 133.

¹⁹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XII.2, p. 86.

²⁰ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIII.9, p. 246.

²¹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIV.5, p. 110.

²² Henry of Livonia, ch. XVI.4, p. 158; XV.3, p. 132.

²³ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIV.5, p. 112.

²⁴ Henry of Livonia, ch. I.10, p. 6.

not the case that the heathens did not believe in the Christian God, but that they believed him to be a bad god.

Several hints exist in written sources which suggest that a certain knowledge of Christianity was common among the local inhabitants before the conversions, but how far this knowledge extended cannot be established. The archaeological evidence from the pre-conquest period, that is objects with Christian symbols and burial customs, can be regarded as far more systematic than the evidence of scarce written sources. However, this evidence is often nothing more than a testimony to economic contacts or to the transitory period between paganism and Christianity.²⁵ This applies not only to the eastern Baltic coast, but throughout the region generally.²⁶ Despite the lack of firm written evidence, there can be no doubt that the population of the eastern Baltic lands was acquainted with Christianity, at least through their economic contacts with the Christians, long before conversion.²⁷

The Motives of the Christianizers

When discussing the motives for the Christianization of the territories in question, both the interests of the merchants as well as the crusaders have been addressed.²⁸ Less attention has been paid to the fact that one of the main promoters of the mission, the archbishopric of Hamburg-Bremen, had belonged to a relatively poor ecclesiastical

²⁵ It is sometimes argued that the earliest Christian influences reached Livish and Estonian territories from the east, i.e. from the Russian Orthodox Church: Christian Krötzel, 'Finnen, Liven, Russen. Zur päpstlichen Politik im nördlichen Ostseeraum im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert', in *Ab aquilone*, pp. 44–56 (here 46) and A. Tentelis, 'Die Letten in der Ordenszeit', in *Die Letten*, pp. 140–63 (here 143–44). This is probably true, although it cannot be confirmed by written or linguistic sources. See Enn Tarvel, 'Mission und Glaubenswechsel in Estland und Livland im 11.–13. Jahrhundert aufgrund sprachlicher Quellen', in *Rom und Byzans im Norden: Mission und Glaubenswechsel des 8.–14. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Michael Müller-Wille, 2 vols (Mainz, 1999), 2: 57–67.

²⁶ See Märten Stenberger, 'Christliche Einflüsse im archäologischen Material der Wikingerzeit in Schweden', in *Kirche und Gesellschaft im Ostseeraum*, pp. 9–20. Also Gustaf Trotzig, 'Gegensätze zwischen Heidentum und Christentum im archäologischen Material des 11. Jahrhunderts auf Gotland', in *Kirche und Gesellschaft im Ostseeraum*, pp. 21–30.

²⁷ Early Christian influences and the problems of the transitory society between paganism and Christianity have been widely discussed among archaeologists of the Baltic region. See *Culture Clash or Compromise?*, ed. Nils Blomkvist (Visby, 1998).

²⁸ Sven Ekdahl, 'Die Rolle der Ritterorden bei der Christianisierung der Liven und Letten', in *Gli Inizi del Cristianesimo in Livonia-Lettonia: Atti del Colloquio internazionale di storia ecclesiastica in occasione dell'VIII centenario della Chiesa in Livonia (1186–1986)*, ed. Michele Maccarone (Città del Vaticano, 1989), pp. 203–43.

territory since the conversion of the Saxon region, and conceivably would have been only too glad to gain wider influence both in spiritual and worldly matters.²⁹

The work of the first known Livonian missionary, Meinhard of Segeberg, is depicted in the chronicles of Henry of Livonia and Arnold of Lübeck as a peaceful mission carried out on his own initiative and sanctioned by the archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen, Hartwig.³⁰ However, Meinhard appears to have been well enough equipped to have one-fifth of the newly built stone stronghold in Üxküll (mod. Ikšķile, Latvia) erected at his own expense and also to acquire a piece of land for the purpose of building a church.³¹ His sponsors can only be guessed at. The traditional approach would prefer the position that the mission of Meinhard and his successors played the part of supporting the merchants' interests in this area.³² However, the merchants had established relationships with the Livs before Meinhard's arrival, and Meinhard came to Livish territory not so much to support the merchants, but to take advantage of the trading peace between them and the Livs.³³

The First Converts

In the Christian mission to many parts of Europe, such as Saxony, Scandinavia, Poland and Hungary, conversion proceeded according to a similar pattern: for political, economic or diplomatic reasons the indigenous ruling class of the people in question accepted baptism and the rest of the population followed this example with varying degrees of enthusiasm. At the same time, the local lords became the patrons of churches and monasteries by granting them lands and exercising the *ius patronatus*. In the case of the eastern Baltic lands, we do not possess any data which would enable us either to confirm or deny the existence of a similar pattern. There is some archaeological and architectural evidence, mainly from the island of Ösel (mod. Saaremaa, Estonia), suggesting that the local native ruling class may have exercised the role of church patrons.³⁴ In this case, it can be assumed that

²⁹ Christopher Carroll, 'The Bishoprics of Saxony in the First Century after Christianization', in *Early Medieval Europe* 8 (1999), 219–45 (here 236–37).

³⁰ *Arnoldi chronica Slavorum*, ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz (Hannover, 1868), V.30, pp. 212–3; Henry of Livonia, ch. I.1–12, pp. 2, 4, 6.

³¹ Henry of Livonia, ch. I.6, p. 4.

³² Peep Peter Rebane, 'From Fulco to Theoderic: The Changing Face of the Livonian Mission', in *Muinasaja loojangust omariikluse läveni: Pühendusteos Sulev Vahre 75. sünnipäevaks*, ed. Andres Andresen (Tartu, 2001), pp. 37–68 (here 48).

³³ Ivar Leimus, 'Wann und woher ist der deutsche Kaufmann nach Livland gekommen? Eine numismatische Studie', in *Delectat et docet: Festschrift zum 100jährigen Bestehen des Vereins der Münzenfreunde in Hamburg*, ed. Manfred Mehl (Hamburg, 2004), pp. 317–32 (here 325).

³⁴ See, for example, Kersti Markus, 'Sissejuhatus', in Kersti Markus, Tiina-Mall Kreem and Anu Mänd, *Kaarma kirik* (Tallinn, 2003), pp. 11–16 (here 11–12).

the conversion of at least one part of the local population was the result of their following their own nobles, although the nobles themselves were no doubt often influenced by foreign military force. According to Henry, among the first Livish converts there was someone who asked Theoderic to heal his wounds, promising to accept baptism in return, that is, in exchange for a benefit.³⁵ During the crusader campaign to Vironia, a certain Kyriawan was baptized. He asked for a good god who would give him prosperity and luck instead of the bad god he had had before.³⁶ This means that he, too, was seeking direct profit.

Henry also describes the martyrdom of the Üxküll Livs Kyrian and Layan, who were cruelly executed by their fellow Livs for not denouncing the Christian faith.³⁷ If this episode genuinely took place (and the survival of the names makes this likely), it is more probable that Kyrian and Layan were executed primarily for joining the Germans and thus having committed treason. In Henry's text, serious inner Christian convictions among the newly converted are attributed only to single persons, such as Caupo and Roboam, and never to larger groups of neophytes.³⁸ The stories of such individuals are often given as didactic examples and should not therefore be taken very seriously. However, if any inner Christian convictions did exist at all among the native population at this time, it was more probable in cases of single individuals.

Baptism: Religious Sacrament or Treaty Confirmation?

The first evidence of baptism on a larger scale in Henry's text is associated with the Livs, who allowed themselves to be baptized or promised to accept baptism in return for stone strongholds. Yet once the strongholds were erected, the Livs apostatized, an act which also involved stealing Meinhard's belongings, beating the members of his household (*familia*) and washing the baptism off in the River Dūna (mod. Daugava/Zapadnaya Dvina) to send it back to Germany.³⁹ Baptism was therefore regarded as something material.

The Livs planned to either burn, kill or drown Berthold, the second bishop of Üxküll, and accused him of having come to them because of poverty.⁴⁰ If Henry's text is to be trusted here, the Livs must have known something about the possibilities of earning a living as an ecclesiastic, that is, they knew that Berthold had come to accept a benefice. Berthold was killed in fighting between the Livs and the Christians in 1198. However, the Livs lost the battle and promised to accept baptism in order to avoid further damage and losses. They also accepted

³⁵ Henry of Livonia, ch. I.10, p. 6.

³⁶ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIII.7, p. 240.

³⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. X.5, pp. 48, 50.

³⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. XII.6, p. 92.

³⁹ Henry of Livonia, ch. I.5–6, p. 4, I.9, p. 6.

⁴⁰ Henry of Livonia, ch. II.2, p. 12.

priests and agreed to pay an annual tribute to sustain them.⁴¹ A similar pattern of accepting baptism reoccurs later on several occasions, often together with the giving of hostages as confirmation of the baptism.⁴² This episode was followed by another act of apostasy described according to the previous model: the baptism was washed off and 'sent back' together with the departing Germans. This act was also carried out materially: an image of the Christian God, who was believed to bring floods and epidemics, was carved in wood and sent over the water after the Germans left for Gotland.⁴³ Once again, the question is not about the belief or lack of belief in the existence of the Christian God, but about whether He was considered a good or a bad god. Similarly, the power of baptism could be considered as either good or bad. The washing off of baptism is not a symbolic act freeing oneself from something in which one does not believe. On the contrary, the Livs had belief in the power of baptism, namely in its evil power. The clerics who were forced to leave under the threat of death were driven away as representatives of an irrational power which could bring damage.⁴⁴

After the arrival of the third bishop, Albert von Buxhövdén, some of the Livs again accepted baptism under the threat of war.⁴⁵ This was followed by Albert taking the sons of prominent Livs as hostages.⁴⁶ Later, the act of taking hostages became an almost indispensable part of the process of accepting baptism. However, it was not only practised by the Christians as a guarantee of a peace treaty. The Oselians, for example, used the same method.⁴⁷

Up until the tenth chapter of Henry's chronicle, baptism is almost always the only attribute of Christianity mentioned in connection with the newly converted. When describing the campaign of the apostate Livs against Riga, however, Henry states that they forgot about baptism and the sacraments, cast off their faith and renewed war.⁴⁸ When the Lettgallians of the Ümera region were baptized, they were said to have accepted the priest Alebrand with joy, meaning without hostility. However, they cast lots to ask their own gods whether they should accept the Latin (i.e. Catholic) baptism or that of the Russians of Pskov.⁴⁹ Thus in this case the heathen gods retained their superior position over the new faith. According to Henry, the Lettgallians accepted Christianity quickly and without problems, rejoicing at the arrival of Catholic priests; he also mentions that they had often suffered at the hands of the Livs and Estonians.⁵⁰ The Lettgallians were also the

⁴¹ Henry of Livonia, ch. II.7, p. 14.

⁴² Henry of Livonia, ch. X.13–14, pp. 62, 66, XI.6, p. 78.

⁴³ Henry of Livonia, ch. II.8, p. 14.

⁴⁴ Henry of Livonia, ch. II.10, p. 16.

⁴⁵ Henry of Livonia, ch. IV.3, p. 18.

⁴⁶ Henry of Livonia, ch. IV.4, p. 18.

⁴⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXVI.3, p. 282.

⁴⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. X.6, p. 50.

⁴⁹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XI.7, p. 78.

⁵⁰ Henry of Livonia, ch. XII.6, p. 90.

only neophytes who were said to have experienced martyrdom in large numbers, although this description is more likely to reflect Henry's positive attitude towards them as his own flock than historical truth.⁵¹ The description of this quick conversion is also apparently biased. Henry tells later of a Lettgallian campaign against Estonians, which indicates that they could not have been so weak.⁵² If the Lettgallians really did not show any hostility towards Christianity, their motives must have been purely practical: hoping to gain support against their neighbours.

During the siege of Beverin by the Estonians, the newly converted Lettgallians announced that there would be no peace between Christians and heathens unless the latter accepted the yoke of Christianity and eternal peace and came to believe in one God.⁵³ Although such a speech could have hardly been the invention of the Lettgallians, it surely expressed the main principles of crusading: peace in exchange for conversion. This is also true in the case of the Russian Orthodox Church. When the Russians of Pskov besieged the stronghold of Odenpäh (mod. Otepää, Estonia), the Estonians were so oppressed by hunger and thirst, they asked for peace, and in exchange some of them were baptized.⁵⁴ By contrast, when the newly converted felt assured of their own military strength, they were ready to apostatize, just as the Livs were when they prepared to attack Riga together with the heathen Curonians in 1210.⁵⁵ When the Estonian forces in the stronghold of Fellin (mod. Viljandi, Estonia) were exhausted, they were ready to accept baptism; yet they did not deny their heathen gods, but simply esteemed the Christian God as stronger, and gave hostages as a traditional form of confirming the treaty.⁵⁶ This episode also shows that baptism was accepted on certain terms and during a certain period (the Estonians promised to accept the sacrament of baptism during the same time and according to the same law as the Livs and the Lettgallians). The traditional pattern of accepting peace in exchange for giving hostages (usually young boys) and promising to accept baptism was also followed during the campaign to the area of Halliste, and later in Saccala, when the acceptance of the Christian law – *ius christianitatis* – is stressed. The same pattern was followed on numerous other occasions.⁵⁷ After cruel warfare, the Estonians of Saccala accepted Christianity and were baptized by Peter Kaikewalde, a priest from Finland, and Otto, a priest of the Sword Brethren. The siege of Fellin was followed by the acceptance of baptism in the face of certain death.⁵⁸ The priests, however, did not

⁵¹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIV.8, pp. 118, xxii.

⁵² Henry of Livonia, ch. XII.6, p. 94.

⁵³ Henry of Livonia, ch. XII.6, p. 92.

⁵⁴ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIV.2, p. 108.

⁵⁵ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIV.5, pp. 110, 112, 114.

⁵⁶ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIV.11, p. 126.

⁵⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. XV.7, p. 142, XVI.1, p. 150, XVI.3, p. 158, XIX.8, p. 198, XX.6, p. 206, XXI.5–6, pp. 214, 216, XXIII.6, 9, pp. 238, 250.

⁵⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXVII.2, p. 294.

remain among the neophytes, because of the ‘ferocity’ of the latter.⁵⁹ Here the baptism can be regarded only as a symbolic act confirming military defeat, not a religious sacrament.

When describing the Russian campaign against Odenpäh, the aim of which was apparently nothing more than to collect tribute, Henry uses the same symbolic meaning of baptism: according to him, the Russians of Pskov were angry with the Estonians of Ugaunia for having accepted the Latin baptism instead of the Russian one.⁶⁰ Baptism had a slightly different function in connection with the arrival of the Danes in northern Estonia. The chieftains of Harria and Revalia who were sent as envoys to King Valdemar II were said to have been baptized.⁶¹ Thus, in this case baptism was delivered as confirmation of peace before war, rather than after. However, this changed quickly in the course of the following war, which the Danes fought all year long in order to impose baptism on the Estonians.⁶²

In 1219, the Semgallians of Mesotheren were ready to accept baptism, crusaders and priests if these elements would protect them against the Lithuanians. However, they later backslid and made a treaty with the Lithuanians.⁶³ Here, as on many other occasions, Henry gives the impression that the hostility towards the German colonists meant hostility towards the Christian religion. We should bear in mind that the references to backsliding in some sources should not always be understood as rejecting the Christian faith. It could also serve to mark disloyalty or rebelliousness towards the administrative systems operated by Christians. For example, although the backsliding of the Estonians is mentioned in connection with the uprising of St George’s Night (1343), nothing is actually known about the religious preferences of the rebels.⁶⁴

The memory of crusade and conversion as a justification for rule persisted in this region for a long time and was used as late as the sixteenth century: writing to the pope in connection with the transfer of the immovable property of Roma monastery, King Christian III of Denmark (1534–59) stated that the inhabitants of Estonia and Livonia had been subjugated by war, and forced to leave their idolatry and accept Christianity.⁶⁵ The details of conversion in the former Danish territory of Estonia also are mentioned earlier, in the middle of the fifteenth century by King Christian I (1448–81).⁶⁶ Although these are purely rhetorical tools serving

⁵⁹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIX.4, p. 188.

⁶⁰ Henry of Livonia, ch. XX.3, p. 202.

⁶¹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIII.2, p. 232.

⁶² Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIII.2, p. 232.

⁶³ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIII.3, pp. 232, 234, ch. XXIII.4, p. 236.

⁶⁴ For example in the chronicle of Hermann Wartberge, *Liivimaa noorem riimkroonika 1315–1348*, ed. Sulev Vahtre (Tallinn, 1960), pp. 106–7.

⁶⁵ MS København, Rigsarkivet 301, Tyske kancelli, Udenrigske Afdeling, 1223–1770, Lifland A II, Reval Stift 1517; 1525–1560, no. 22.b (undated copy of king’s original letter).

⁶⁶ MS København, Rigsarkivet, 301, Tyske kancelli, Udenrigske Afdeling, 1223–1770, Lifland A II, Reval Stift, no. 1.h (1458).

political ambitions, they nevertheless bear witness to a long-lasting memory of conversion as the means to obtain power over a certain territory.

Asserting Christian Authority

When the backsliding Livs in the stronghold of Sattesele were defeated by Bishop Albert in 1212, they were required to observe all the Christian sacraments, never to follow pagan rites and to renew their baptism.⁶⁷ With this, the rules for re-accepting Christianity were set. Both in this case and later there is a stress on the importance of paying tithes as a sign of submission to ecclesiastical power, although some of the Christianizers, for example the priest Alebrand, clearly admitted that oppression and deprivation of goods might lead neophytes away from Christianity.⁶⁸ Even in Henry's scarce reports, it becomes clear that there was pressure from certain parties of Christians to lighten the material obligations of the newly converted in order to keep them away from backsliding. In connection with the Danish advocate Godescalc, who was considered to be too harsh towards the neophytes, Henry delivers a whole sermon, apparently copied from some unknown source, in which he stresses that the Holy Virgin did not approve of the high tribute forced upon the newly converted.⁶⁹ Later, in connection with the tour of the papal legate William of Modena, Henry mentions that he stressed the importance of moderation in posing obligations on the newly converted, in order that they would not backslide.⁷⁰

The chronicler Thietmar of Merseburg relates that for the western Slavs the acceptance of Christianity meant paying tribute and giving allegiance to the Holy Roman emperor.⁷¹ The obligation of paying tribute as an obstacle to the acceptance of Christianity is stressed also by Adam of Bremen.⁷² Apart from the episode of Godescalc, Henry attributes no substantial importance to the question of the tribute, although it may have been one of the most important reasons for backsliding during the early decades of Christianization.⁷³ When the Livonians asked Albert, bishop of Riga, for the replacement of the tithe with a lower tribute, they were allowed to pay a lower grain tax on the condition that if they ever co-operated with heathens or practised heathen rites, they would have to pay the full tithe.⁷⁴ This kind of lower rate for church taxes can be perhaps compared to the

⁶⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. XVI.4, p. 160.

⁶⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. XVIII.2, p. 170.

⁶⁹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXV.2, pp. 268, 270.

⁷⁰ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIX.3, p. 318.

⁷¹ Haendler, 'Reichskirche und Mission', p. 69.

⁷² Haendler, 'Reichskirche und Mission', p. 72.

⁷³ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXVIII.2, 7, pp. 202, 312.

⁷⁴ Henry of Livonia, ch. XV.5, p. 138.

decima Slavorum on the colonized territory of the Slavs.⁷⁵ In 1240, the taxes paid by the Estonians are mentioned in a context which implies that they were taxes (Lat. *redditus*) not equal to the tithe.⁷⁶

In competing with the Danish priests, the German clerics stressed that the land belonged to the Germans and therefore the Danish priests had no right to baptize the people of the territory.⁷⁷ Here, baptism is clearly a symbolic act of confirming the power of a particular group over a particular territory. The baptizing activities of the Swedes around Leal (mod. Lihula, Estonia) are to be understood in the same way.⁷⁸ In connection with events in the future bishopric of Ösel-Wiek in western Estonia, Henry stresses that the Rigans had never lacked authority in Wiek (mod. Läänemaa, Estonia), which they had subjugated by conversion, baptism, tribute and the taking of hostages.⁷⁹ This is one of the clearest occasions where Henry lists the symbols and components of subjugation of the heathens. When Bishop Hermann of Tartu (Albert's brother) settled at Odenpäh at the beginning of 1224, he is said to have taken some Germans to live with him in the stronghold there in order that they might teach the Christian religion to the subject Estonians.⁸⁰ He also took priests with him to Ugaunia and bestowed churches and benefices on them as well as imposing a tithe on Estonians. The same happened in Saccala, on the territory of the Sword Brethren.⁸¹ This is the first instance when the actual submission of land and people to new lay and ecclesiastical lords is described in Henry's text.

Pastoral Work

Beside the events which were all more or less connected with violence, some kind of peaceful pastoral work was practised among the Livs during the first years of Christianization. One example that demonstrates this is the well-known letter of Pope Innocent III of 1201, in which the Christianizers are admonished to show lenience and tolerance towards the newly baptized.⁸² Another is the episode of the death of a priest called Sifrid in the parish of Holm, where the priest was

⁷⁵ Wolf-Dieter Hauschild, *Kirchengeschichte Lübecks: Christentum und Bürgertum in neun Jahrhunderten* (Lübeck, 1981), p. 46.

⁷⁶ See *LUB* 1/1, no. 165.

⁷⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIV.2, pp. 256, 258; also ch. XXIV.5, pp. 262, 264.

⁷⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIV.3, p. 258.

⁷⁹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXVIII.7, p. 312.

⁸⁰ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXVIII.8, p. 312.

⁸¹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXVIII.8–9, pp. 312, 314.

⁸² *LUB* 1/1, no. 13, col. 15–18. On the dating: Leonid Arbusow, *Römischer Arbeitsbericht*, Acta Universitatis Latviensis 17 (Riga, 1928), 1: 323, no. 4; Leonid Arbusow, *Römischer Arbeitsbericht*, Acta Universitatis Latviensis. Filologijas un filosofijas fakultātes serija I, 3 (Riga, 1929), 3: 72, no. 1.

piously buried by the newly converted.⁸³ Although this episode is depicted by Henry in order to give an example of a miracle (the miraculous extension of the coffin board), it should also be regarded as an indication of some kind of peaceful pastoral activities.⁸⁴

Evidence on the subject of sacraments in the early stage of Christianization is extraordinarily scarce. Henry's use of the word sacrament is inconsequential: when the Germans were frightened in the face of the supposed threat of pagans, they 'threw aside the blessed oil and other sacraments' (*proiecto sacrosancto crismate ceterisque sacramentis*).⁸⁵ Here, the term 'sacrament' seems to refer to a substance which is involved in celebrating the sacraments proper. In connection with the backsliding of the Saccalans Henry seems to use the word sacrament in a symbolic and more general way (*immemores sacramentorum omnium ante susceptorum*), since, in reality, no sacraments proper apart from baptism could have been accepted by the Saccalans.⁸⁶

The descriptions of baptisms carried out by Henry himself and the newly ordained Theoderic in the provinces of Normegunde, Loppegunde, Vironia, Mocha and Jogentagana are fairly reliable. They baptized people village by village, calling them together and teaching them the message of the Gospel.⁸⁷ Having carried out large-scale baptisms, however, the priests returned to Livonia.⁸⁸ This means that the newly baptized people enjoyed no pastoral care whatsoever; no confirmation, confession, last unction or Christian funerals could take place. At the same time, in connection with the Estonian revolt (1222–23) initiated by the Oselians, it is mentioned that there were Danish priests living with Estonians in Warbola (mod. Varbola, Estonia), while the German priests in Estonia often did not stay with the neophytes.⁸⁹

The period when the conversion of the eastern Baltic lands began and evolved has been generally accepted as the time when the importance of preaching grew significantly and preaching techniques developed.⁹⁰ However, very little is known about the actual preaching activities in this territory both during the time of conquest and conversion and later. The locally surviving sermon texts are too scarce to enable a picture to be drawn of the actual contents of the sermons held in

⁸³ Henry of Livonia, ch. VII.6, p. 30.

⁸⁴ See the analysis of this miracle description in Marek Tamm, *Imeteod ristiusustamisaegsel Liivi- ja Eestimaal* (Tallinn, 1996), pp. 32–37.

⁸⁵ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIII.7, p. 240.

⁸⁶ Henry of Livonia, ch. XX.8, p. 208.

⁸⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIV.5, pp. 262, 264.

⁸⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIV.5, p. 264.

⁸⁹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXVI.5, p. 284.

⁹⁰ See, for example, Phyllis B. Roberts, *Thomas Becket in the Medieval Latin Preaching Tradition: An Inventory of Sermons about St Thomas Becket c. 1170–1400* (Steenbrugge, 1992), pp. 17–19. Also Christoph T. Maier, *Crusade Propaganda and Ideology: Model Sermons for the Preaching of the Cross* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 3–68.

this territory.⁹¹ The first time we learn about wider preaching activities among the Livs occurs during the fourth year of Albert's episcopate (1202) when the monk Engelbert of Neumünster, the above-mentioned Theoderic, the priest Alebrand and others were said to have preached among the pagans.⁹² By this time there was both a church in Üxküll and a convent (St Mary's) in Riga. Soon afterwards, a Cistercian monastery was established at Dünamünde (mod. Daugavgrīva, Latvia).⁹³ The establishment of parishes, erection of churches and appointment of priests on Livish territory seems to have mostly taken place from the ninth year of Albert's rule (1207) onwards.⁹⁴

The priest Daniel heard from one of the Livs in Lielvarde about a vision: the god of the Livs, carved out of wood, had told him of a threat from a Lithuanian army which meant that the Livs did not dare to come together.⁹⁵ Daniel, who appears to be one of the most active and successful baptizers of the Livs, announced this to be an entrapment of the Devil and preached about one God, one faith and one baptism. Staying with the Livs and Lettgallians of Idumea, he is said to have explained to them the idea of eternal life.⁹⁶ The priest Henry (the putative author of the chronicle) stayed with the Lettgallians of Ūmera, showing them the beatitude of eternal life.⁹⁷ These are the first instances where Henry describes the content of a missionary sermon. Preaching is also mentioned on later occasions but its content is never described.⁹⁸

In 1225, the papal legate William of Modena arrived in Livonia. Henry tells of wide-ranging preaching, which the legate carried out among the Lettgallians, Livs and Estonians.⁹⁹ If the first wave of preaching which took place in connection with baptism can be characterized as a catechization, William's preaching was carried out in front of a baptized audience. His main themes were the suffering of Christ, the admonition not to return to paganism and the existence of only one God. William's journey is the first instance which mentions the teaching and admonishing not only of the neophytes, but also of the Germans.¹⁰⁰

⁹¹ For example, in Estonia there survive only eight manuscripts containing sermon texts from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries. See Tiina Kala, *Mittelalterliche Handschriften in den Sammlungen des Stadtarchivs Tallinn und des Estnischen Historischen Museums. Katalog* (Tallinn, 2007), pp. 17–124.

⁹² Henry of Livonia, ch. VI.2, p. 22.

⁹³ Henry of Livonia, ch. VI.3, pp. 22, 24.

⁹⁴ Henry of Livonia, ch. XI.2, p. 68.

⁹⁵ Henry of Livonia, ch. X.14, p. 64.

⁹⁶ Henry of Livonia, ch. X.15, p. 66.

⁹⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. XI.7, p. 80.

⁹⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. XII.5, p. 88.

⁹⁹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIX.2–3, p. 316.

¹⁰⁰ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIX.3, 5, pp. 316, 318, 320, 322.

Religious and Moral Norms for the Neophytes: Fulfilment and Violation

A gap in relevant sources between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries means there is insufficient evidence with which to describe the developments of local church life in the period between the conversion and the later Middle Ages. Up until the 1420s, the sources contain no data on everyday pastoral work or any popular religious life of the region. For this reason, the church order of Johannes Ambundi, archbishop of Riga, dating from 1422, looks like a turning point in local church life, but it should in no circumstances be regarded as such; there must surely have been earlier synod statutes. Ambundi's order concerned mostly the religious life of the peasants and country parishes, and must have established the rules in this sphere for a long time.¹⁰¹ The Livonian clerical and secular lords were to come together every year for the general good of the country in a place chosen by the archbishop of Riga.¹⁰² The church regulations would have been repeated more or less consequently each year, and the order was reread during the *Landtag* held in Wolmar as late as 1504.¹⁰³ According to Johannes, the main problems (MLG *brekelicheit*) among the peasants concerned the correct Christian belief (*rechte christlike geloven*), Christian marriage and moral norms (*cristlike ee un redelicheit*). These issues had been at the centre of attention of local church authorities from at least the beginning of the thirteenth century. The main change that can perhaps be observed is that during the thirteenth century the problem was whether the native population accepted Christianity, whereas by the beginning of the fifteenth century the problem was whether it had been accepted in the right way and in the correct form.

The most important regulations concerning non-Germans in the bishop's statutes involved obligatory baptism, participation in the Mass, punishment for selling and buying goods on greater church festivals before midday (it is notable that the Germans were punished with banishment while the non-Germans were punished with the confiscation of goods) and the learning of the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary, twelve paragraphs of the Christian religion and the Ten Commandments, as well as the Seven Deadly Sins.¹⁰⁴ These were also to be regarded as basic issues in the religious education of the non-Germans during the following century.¹⁰⁵ The peasants were also admonished to confess and accept the Eucharist at least once a year and maintain their marriages, while the observation of the above-mentioned regulations was to be guaranteed by church visitations.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹ *Akten und Recesse* I, no. 299, pp. 261–65.

¹⁰² *Akten und Recesse* I, no. 299, § 15, pp. 264–65.

¹⁰³ *Akten und Recesse* I, no. 299, note p. 261.

¹⁰⁴ *Akten und Recesse* I, no. 299, pp. 262–63.

¹⁰⁵ The above-mentioned texts are listed among those which were to be taught at the non-German altar, erected in 1476 in the Church of St Nicholas in Tallinn (MS Tallinn, Tallinna Linnaarhiiv, collection 230, inventory 1, no. Bk 2 I, fol. 37r).

¹⁰⁶ *Akten und Recesse* I, no. 299, pp. 262–64.

The pagan habits of the non-Germans (that is, the peasants) are described in synodal statutes of Riga from 1428: the peasants buried their dead in woods or other profane places, which is also where their predecessors had buried their dead during the time of paganism.¹⁰⁷ This indicates that those burial places had to have been at least two hundred years old or more. Funerals were said to be celebrated with eating and drinking, not only in pagan burial places, but also in consecrated cemeteries and in churches, while food was also offered to the deceased.¹⁰⁸ The use of Christian places of worship for pagan rites shows that the peasants had accepted them for their pagan rites. The means of correction of the peasants were very lenient. The church ministers and vassals, and everyone possessing a right to jurisdiction, were ordered to admonish the peasants to abandon pagan habits. However, those in charge who favoured these habits were to be seriously punished.¹⁰⁹

The peasants are reported to have believed in thunder (which they regarded as their god), as well as venerating serpents, trees and other natural objects, believing that their luck and success would come from the favour of these objects. Clerics and lay people were admonished to root out these beliefs, but at the same time no actual punishments for pagan practices are mentioned.¹¹⁰ The non-authorized erection of chapels and images of saints (especially for St Anthony) and of almsboxes, both in the countryside and near towns and settlements, was prohibited.¹¹¹ That means that there were a certain number of popular Catholic beliefs not directly approved by the official Church. There are also several descriptions of mixed pagan and Catholic religious practices of the peasants in the chronicles and notes of Lutheran pastors from the end of the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries.¹¹² This indicates that, once converted, the peasants were persistent in their beliefs and rites.

In the orders of Johannes Ambundi from 1422 there is no mention of a language problem. This contrasts with the contents of the synodal statutes of Archbishop Henning from 1428, where the problem of knowing the local language is an important issue in connection with pastoral work among the non-Germans. Benefices were to be given only to properly educated priests who also knew the language of their flock. Those who already held benefices and did not know the language had to find chaplains with knowledge of it within a year, who were to deliver sermons.¹¹³ The problem of language is also mentioned in the additions to the statutes from 1437.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁷ LUB 1/7, no. 690, § 19, p. 470.

¹⁰⁸ LUB 1/7, no. 690, § 19, p. 479.

¹⁰⁹ LUB 1/7, no. 690, § 19, p. 479.

¹¹⁰ LUB 1/7, no. 690, § 27, pp. 482–83.

¹¹¹ LUB 1/7, no. 690, § 29, pp. 483–84.

¹¹² See the latest English translation of one of the most popular descriptions of half-Catholic rites in Balthasar Russow's chronicle in Anu Mänd, *Urban Carnival: Festive Culture in the Hanseatic Cities of the Eastern Baltic, 1350–1550* (Turnhout, 2005), p. 171.

¹¹³ LUB 1/7, no. 690, § 3, p. 472.

¹¹⁴ LUB 1/9, no. 131, § 1, p. 84.

For non-Germans, serious obstacles to participation in church services were the obligations put on them by their lords during church festivals. In the synodal statutes of 1428, the lords are ordered to keep peasants free for church services during Sundays, feast days of the apostles and other major festivals, under threat of excommunication.¹¹⁵ As in the regulations of 1422, the statutes stress the need for proper baptism and give its proper form: *ego baptizo te in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti. Amen*. The priests had to teach both male and female members of their congregations to baptize their children in their mother tongue in case of necessity.¹¹⁶ Thus the sentence ‘Mina ristin sind Isa, Poja ja Püha Vaimu nimel, aamen’ must have been common knowledge among the Estonian peasantry. As in the regulations of 1422, the statutes of 1505 also mention the basic texts of the faith (the Lord’s Prayer, the Hail Mary and the Creed) which were to be taught to parishioners in their mother tongue on holy days, especially on Sundays.¹¹⁷

The observation of these points was to be guaranteed by a yearly visitation, during which the religious knowledge of the peasants was to be tested, consolidated and regulated, and crimes and transgressions punished.¹¹⁸ As the visitations were normally announced beforehand, it can be supposed that church rectors, who were concerned with the results of visitations, were trying to teach their flock more intensively during a shorter period at least once a year.

In the synodal statutes of 1428 the question of marriage is handled from the point of view of inner church discipline. Each rector had to obtain the *Summula* of Johannes Andreae on the fourth book of the *Decretals*, which contains explanations of cases and impediments which can occur in connection with marriage.¹¹⁹ The peasants were said to have married within the prohibited degrees of affinity (i.e. nearer than the fourth degree). The need to prevent such marriages is said to have been unknown to many, and so the rectors were to announce it frequently from the pulpit. The peasants are also said to have divorced often and the rectors were admonished to persuade the transgressors to return to their wives or husbands.¹²⁰

In his synod statutes from 1505, Johannes, the bishop of Ösel-Wiek, mentions that the parochial clergy must report every error of faith occurring among the parishioners both in town and in the countryside, especially among the Estonians,

¹¹⁵ LUB 1/7, no. 690, § 9, pp. 473–74.

¹¹⁶ LUB 1/7, no. 690, § 25, pp. 481–82.

¹¹⁷ Especially the formula *Jhesu Christe fili Dei vivi, qui natus es de virgine Maria, miserere mei* had to be taught to ‘Estonians and other neophytes’. Who the ‘other neophytes’ in these parts of Estonia might be, remains unclear. LUB 2/2, no. 781, § 6, p. 600.

¹¹⁸ LUB 1/7, no. 690, § 23, p. 481.

¹¹⁹ LUB 1/7, no. 690, § 32, pp. 484–85. The same is repeated in additional statutes of 1437, LUB 1/9, no. 131, § 14, p. 86. Not a single exemplar of this obligatory literature survives in Estonia nowadays. The only surviving regulations of canonists on marriage are contained in MS Tallinn, Tallinna Linnaarhiiv, collection 230, inventory 1, no. Cm 4, fol. 29rb–29vb, where Jordanus, Raimundus, Hostiensis and Gaufridus are cited.

¹²⁰ LUB 1/7, no. 690, § 32, p. 485.

so that the bishop could take appropriate measures against these errors. The bishop adds to his statutes a separate section concerning the Estonians.¹²¹ They were, according to his knowledge, hardly leading a Christian life, and were ignorant of the Ten Commandments, which should have been taught to them in the first place. The bishop ordered his diocesan clergy under threat of excommunication to teach their parishioners the Lord's Prayer and the Creed in Estonian every Sunday and holy day so that they could understand what they were praying for (*ut possint intelligere ea que oraverint*). The essential prayer texts in Estonian must thus have once been widely disseminated, although only one exemplar of these survives.¹²² The teaching of non-Estonian parishioners is never mentioned explicitly.

Bishop Johannes also stressed that the parochial clergy almost never taught the Ten Commandments to their Estonian flock. When asked, the non-Germans responded that they did not know these commandments, nor had they ever heard about them. Therefore, the parochial clergy were admonished under threat of excommunication to teach the Ten Commandments on Sundays and feast days straight after the recitation of the Lord's Prayer and the Creed. The bishop also stressed that this should be done clearly, commandment by commandment, in order that the matter could be better memorized by the flock. This is the only surviving record of a methodological approach to catechetical teaching. The bishop also adds to his text the Ten Commandments with explanations, apparently in order to guarantee a universal way of teaching them within his diocese. The peasants had to be able to recite the commandments during confession or in *wacca* (tax collection accompanied by common feasting) in front of a bailiff or any other official, under the penalty of whipping or other means of correction. This penance was imposed because of the stubbornness of the peasants. The text, however, does not reveal whether this stubbornness was related to religious matters or whether it was a general characteristic of the peasants. These regulations are repeated almost word for word in the synodal statutes and their additions from 1517.¹²³

A general characteristic of the synodal statutes and other church regulations is that they never accuse the native population of not attending church services or rejecting sacraments. Only the insufficient possibilities of fulfilling Christian obligations and the insufficient skills of the parish clergy are mentioned. There is scarce evidence of how the normative acts were observed in practice. From Catholic times, only the above-mentioned copies of visitation protocols of Ösel-Wiek from the beginning of the 1520s survive. The relatively detailed regulations for carrying out a visitation, especially for examining peasants, were probably not always scrupulously followed.¹²⁴ The protocols often cover only a part of

¹²¹ LUB 2/2, nos 781, 782, pp. 599–607.

¹²² See Paul Johansen, *Eestikeelsed palved Kullamaalt* (Tallinn, 1923).

¹²³ MS København, Rigsarkivet, Fremmed proveniens, Lifland, Øsel stift, Registrant 1A, fols 2r–8r.

¹²⁴ MS København, Rigsarkivet, Fremmed proveniens, Lifland, Øsel stift, Registrant 1A, fols 69r–75r, undated.

these regulations.¹²⁵ Among other matters the visitation regulations mention, the question whether peasants venerated holy forests (Lat. *lucos*) or stones and trees,¹²⁶ and whether they carried out divinations, venerated thunder or feasted its honour in order to attain better harvests occur.¹²⁷ Whereas in earlier regulations such transgressions were to be eliminated by persuasion and teaching, in the regulations of the 1520s those who have committed transgressions were to be punished by burning.¹²⁸ Despite this, no evidence of burning alive from Catholic times exists, although cases of such punishment do occur in later times.¹²⁹

Among the relatively concise and one-sided copies of visitation minutes there are some remarkable exceptions, especially in connection with the church of Kaarma on the island of Ösel. Here, the local priest is reported to have ignored many of his obligations, while the peasants were pious enough not to bury their dead without a priest.¹³⁰ Whether this piety was sincere, or whether they simply meant to collect evidence against the priest who was violating the rules, remains a matter for speculation.

The methodological problem in the analysis of the relationships between the fulfilling of Christian rites, economic obligations and moral norms and the actual acceptance of Christian teaching is the fact that we do not know whether, or to what extent, the violation of Christian norms meant protest against this religion. Violations might have been caused by lack of knowledge, by practical needs or by a psychologically understandable normal protest against any restrictions. Pagan practices could have been followed alongside Christian ones; in other words, following pagan habits did not automatically mean that Christian habits were not followed at the same time. When looking at those acts that aimed to restore some pagan rites, it can be seen that at least some aspects of a Christian way of life already existed among the Estonians during the early years of conversion: marriage practices were altered and at least some of the dead were buried according to Christian rites.¹³¹ This would have taken place not because of altered beliefs, but as a result of constant pressure. Perhaps this was partly

¹²⁵ MS København, Rigsarkivet, Fremmed proveniens, Lifland, Øsel stift, Registrant 1A, fols 49v–62r.

¹²⁶ MS København, Rigsarkivet, Fremmed proveniens, Lifland, Øsel stift, Registrant 1A, fol. 70v.

¹²⁷ MS København, Rigsarkivet, Fremmed proveniens, Lifland, Øsel stift, Registrant 1A, fol. 71r.

¹²⁸ MS København, Rigsarkivet, Fremmed proveniens, Lifland, Øsel stift, Registrant 1A, fol. 71r.

¹²⁹ Maia Madar, 'Nõiaprotsessid Eestis XVI sajandist XIX sajandini', in *Religiooni ja ateismi ajaloost*, pp. 124–45.

¹³⁰ Tiina Kala, 'Saare-Lääne piiskopkonna käekäik', in *Saare-Lääne piiskopkond. Artiklid Lääne-Eesti keskajast / Bistum Ösel-Wiek: Artikelsammlung zum Mittelalter in Westestland*, ed. Ülla Paras (Haapsalu, 2004), pp. 9–37 (here 30).

¹³¹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXVI.8, p. 286.

guaranteed by the holding of hostages by the Christians; in such cases family dramas can be imagined, as mothers were sent away from their husbands in order to preserve the lives of their sons.

We should also bear in mind that the statutes were general normative documents whose primary aim was to maintain and improve discipline among the clergy. These statutes make almost no mention of common believers of German origin save, perhaps, in connection with the articles concerning sorcery, divination and Judaic beliefs and heresy.¹³² At the same time, discipline among non-Germans, who were not the main focus of these texts, is often explicitly mentioned. Although the violation of Christian moral norms is usually associated with the local native population, it can be in no way regarded as a specific feature of this population. The transgressions described appear to have been common among much of the lower-class population of Western Europe not only in the Middle Ages, but also in early modern times.¹³³ The same applies to religious practices; for example, in Scandinavia pagan habits were observed until at least the sixteenth century.¹³⁴ Similar phenomena on the opposite coast of the Baltic Sea therefore cannot be regarded as an exceptional feature of the peasant population.

A more interesting question is rather why the late medieval normative sources, such as the synodal statutes, do not mention the violation of Christian moral norms by German laymen, when similar sources do from the eighteenth century, for example.¹³⁵ The moral transgressions of colonists are also treated in those lawcodes which were used locally, such as the Lübeck Law.¹³⁶ Thus the local church seemed to deliberately stress violations of church norms by the natives, but not by the colonists. The national element, normally accepted as rather irrelevant in the medieval context, appears to play a significant role according to local sources. If we treat the idea of nationality as expressed in sources not as an ethnic but as a social category, everything falls into its proper place: a non-German origin simply means membership of a lower social class. The same applies to the word 'neophyte', which was used up until the sixteenth century to determine not so much the religious, but rather the social characteristics of individuals.

¹³² LUB 1/7, no. 690, § 37, 38, 42, pp. 487–88, 490.

¹³³ Henry Kamen, *Early Modern European Society* (London, 2003), pp. 18, 56.

¹³⁴ Sven Ulric Palme, 'Die Kirche in der Gesellschaft der Landschaftsgesetze', in *Kirche und Gesellschaft im Ostseeraum*, pp. 55–63 (here 56).

¹³⁵ For example, the church chronicle of the parish of Jõelähtme near Tallinn (MS Tartu, Eesti Ajalooarhiiv, 1212–2–1), p. 77.

¹³⁶ *Lübecki õiguse Tallinna koodeks, 1282 / Der Revaler Kodex des lübischen Rechts 1282*, ed. Tiina Kala (Tallinn, 1998), § 40, 62 and 122, pp. 134, 140, 156–57.

Conclusions

During the conquest of Livonia in the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries matters of religion often served as political and diplomatic tools to establish a new political and administrative power, thus also figuring as rhetorical devices in the sources. Consequently it is highly problematic to deduce from these sources any real attitudes towards the Christian religion among the pagans during these times. The first stage of Christianization in Livonia comprised very clearly established procedures: after direct military action (or the threat of such) baptism was accepted, preceded by minimal or often no catechization, the promise to pay church taxes was made. This 'treaty' was confirmed by the (involuntary) giving of hostages, mainly the sons of chieftains. Thus the acceptance of baptism served as a sign of surrender to the military and administrative power of the Christians. In cases of apostasy or rejection of baptism the existence of the Christian God and the effects of baptism were not doubted, but rather suspected of having an evil and harmful influence.

The practice of taking hostages would deprive the conquered people of the next generation of potential leaders and, moreover, perhaps even turn this young generation of the elite against their kinsmen. The elite of the conquered peoples may therefore have ceased to exist not because of physical extermination, but because of this change in their moral and religious attitudes.

During the later Middle Ages the main question concerning Christianization seems to be not whether the non-Germans were willing to accept Christian teaching, but whether they did it in the right way. The statutes and visitation protocols of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries show the survival of pagan rites among the peasants that are quite similar to those described among the rural population of other parts of Europe. The apparently poor results in establishing Christianity among the non-Germans was not due to their stubborn nature or to the fact that they still preferred pagan beliefs to Christian ones. The rural population, highly dependent on the natural environment and poorly provided with parochial care, received Catholicism not instead of, but alongside paganism, following both at the same time in their own way.

Chapter 10

Saints' Cults in Medieval Livonia¹

Anu Mänd

Saints' cults played a crucial role in medieval society. Although we know very little about the beliefs and rituals of the indigenous peoples of Livonia, either before or after the thirteenth-century conquest, we may assume that the process of Christianization must have caused major changes in their religious practices.² How quickly these changes took place, and how deep they were, is a question which is difficult to answer, given the scarcity of sources describing the attitudes of the indigenous peoples towards the Christian faith, or dealing with their religious customs. This is valid not only for the thirteenth century but also for the rest of the medieval period. There exist, of course, brief complaints in documents such as church statutes about the ignorance and superstition of the 'non-Germans', but these texts were written by and from the point of view of the ruling elites and not that of non-Germans themselves, who did not possess a written culture before the nineteenth century. One may also assume that complaints about such matters were a commonplace in other newly Christianized countries as well.

However, it is not only the beliefs and customs of the native inhabitants of Livonia that we are interested in, but also those of the 'newcomers' in the country, that is, the (predominantly German) upper and middle classes. The location of Livonia between the Roman Catholic West and the Russian Orthodox East (not to mention the neighbouring Lithuanians who remained pagan until the late fourteenth century) makes this region an interesting melting pot of different cultural and religious influences. The political, economic and cultural connections to Germany, Denmark and Sweden, the role of the Hanseatic League, the presence of the military orders (first the Sword Brethren, then the Teutonic Order) and the monastic orders (most notably the Cistercians and the Dominicans) must all have had a significant impact on the development of local religious life.

This chapter explores only one aspect of religious life in Livonia, namely the cults of saints. This is perhaps most conspicuously reflected in the choice of the patron saints of the churches, towns and other institutions. However, the study is hindered by the scarcity of sources: there are very few surviving calendars and dedication charters of churches and altars. In the majority of cases we do not know when a church or altar was founded and by whom. This makes it difficult

¹ This article was written under the auspices of grant no. 6900 awarded by the Estonian Science Foundation.

² See Marek Tamm and Tõnno Jonuks, 'Religious Practices of the Estonians in the Medieval Written Sources (11th to 15th centuries)', in *Estonian Mythology*, ed. Mare Kõiva (Helsinki, forthcoming).

to estimate the range of the saints known in Livonia, and the ebbs and flows in the cult of individual saints. The same can be said about possible changes of dedications. Although the Catholic period in Livonia lasted only slightly longer than three centuries, there is evidence of such changes in the patron saints of the churches, monasteries and altars. More changes took place in the early modern period, which, together with the shortage of evidence from the Middle Ages, complicates the study of the original patron saints.

This chapter will first outline the role of the Virgin Mary as the patron of the country and of the German mission in Livonia. It goes on to discuss the local idiosyncrasies of the saints' cults. Among the questions to be addressed are: to what extent the thirteenth-century crusade and the presence of the Teutonic Order may have influenced the cult of certain 'military' saints; why no local saints emerged in Livonia; and which of the new saints, canonized between the thirteenth and the early sixteenth centuries, were introduced in the region. It is also interesting to detect how the veneration of 'Northern' or 'Scandinavian' saints reached different parts of Livonia, and whether the geographical factor was decisive in this respect.

The cult of saints in medieval Livonia is a subject that has thus far attracted only minimal scholarly attention. The complex political history of the region in the twentieth century, not least the restrictions of the Soviet period, did not favour topics connected with religion. Secondly, since modern Latvia and Estonia have remained within the Lutheran tradition, the study of Catholic religious practices has not been considered of great importance even in those periods when there was no such political pressure. The first scholarly writings on church history which also touch the subject of the saints originated among Baltic German scholars from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The monograph of Hermann von Bruiningk from 1904, discussing a missal and a breviary of Riga, can still be regarded as the best reference work on the subject: the second part of the volume consists of a catalogue of the saints known in Riga.³ About the same time, a study devoted specifically to the saints' cults was published, though anonymously, by Wilhelm Heine.⁴ While predominantly focusing on Estonian and Latvian folk customs on particular saint's days, he also listed churches, chapels and altars dedicated to these saints. A comprehensive monograph by Leonid Arbusow on the Reformation is still widely consulted for pre-Reformation practices as well.⁵ The main value of these

³ Hermann von Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet nach dem Brauche der Rigaschen Kirche im späteren Mittelalter* (Riga, 1904).

⁴ [Wilhelm Heine], 'Hagiologisches aus Alt-Livland. Studien und Analekten zur Geschichte der Heiligenverehrung in Liv-, Est- und Kurland vom Beginn des 13. Jahrhunderts bis auf die Gegenwart von einem Livländer', *Der Katholik: Zeitschrift für katholische Wissenschaft und kirchliches Leben* 27 (1903), 306–32, 414–30; 29 (1904), 378–91; 30 (1904), 24–41; 32 (1905), 128–37, 217–30, 282–94.

⁵ Leonid Arbusow, Jr, *Die Einführung der Reformation in Liv-, Est- und Kurland* (Leipzig, 1919–21).

studies lies in the amount of documentary evidence collected by the authors; they did not, however, attempt to place the Livonian material within the wider European comparative context. Furthermore, they generally counted on the continuity of (oral) tradition: that is, they assumed that if the patron saint of a church turns up in nineteenth-century sources, this also represents the medieval situation.

A growing interest in the mentality and religious practices in medieval Livonia, including the cult of the saints, has occurred since the 1990s. Tiina Kala in particular has studied the church calendar and religious life in medieval Reval (mod. Tallinn, Estonia).⁶ Heiki Valk has analysed folkloric and archaeological material from cemeteries, chapels and other holy sites in Estonia.⁷ Art historians have explored the relations between the cult of certain saints and their representation in art.⁸ This chapter does not aim to provide a thorough analysis of the saints' cults in the region, but rather to draw attention to certain problems indicated in the introductory remarks above.

Since fully preserved calendars survive only from Riga and Reval and not from other parts of medieval Livonia, one of the best options to study the cult of the saints is to analyse the patron saints in the region.⁹ In the following, we shall move from the patron saint(s) of the land and bishoprics to those of the towns and churches. Since the number and quality of the sources on different institutions

⁶ Tiina Kala, 'The Church Calendar and Yearly Cycle in the Life of Medieval Reval', in *Quotidianum Estonicum*, ed. Jüri Kivimäe and Juhan Kreem (Krems, 1996), pp. 103–10.

⁷ Heiki Valk, 'Christian and Non-Christian Holy Sites in Medieval Estonia: A Reflection of Ecclesiastical Attitudes towards Popular Religion', in *The European Frontier: Clashes and Compromises in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jörn Staecker (Lund, 2004), pp. 299–310.

⁸ Anu Mänd, 'The Patron Saint of Medieval Tallinn', in *Maasta, kivistä ja hengestä / Earth, Stone and Spirit: Markus Hiekkänen Festschrift*, ed. Hanna-Maria Pellinen (Turku, 2009), pp. 360–66; Mänd, 'Über den Marienaltar der Revaler Schwarzenhäupter und seine Ikonographie', in *Eesti kunstisidemed Madalmaadega 15.–17. sajandil*, ed. Tiina Abel, Anu Mänd and Reet Rast (Tallinn, 2000), pp. 228–38; Merike Kurisoo, 'Sancta Anna ora pro nobis. Images and Veneration of St Anne in Medieval Livonia', *Acta Historiae Artium Balticae* 2 (2007), 18–34.

⁹ The missal of the cathedral of Riga from the beginning of the fifteenth century, including a calendar, and the breviary from 1513 of the Rigan diocese have been thoroughly analysed by Bruiningk in his *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*. A medical-astrological manuscript from the first half of the sixteenth century, kept in the Latvian National Library in Riga, includes a calendar that most likely originates from Reval: Anu Mänd, 'Ootamatu leid Riist – 16. sajandi kalender Tallinnast', *Tuna* 3 (2007), 70–86. Handwritten remarks in a *Martyrologium* of Belinus de Padua (printed in Venice in 1509), that most probably originates from the Dominican friary in Reval, also enable us to reconstruct the local calendar of feasts: Kala, 'The Church Calendar', p. 110; Kala, 'Tallinna dominiiklaste kalender reformatsioonieelse ajakasutuse peeglina', *Vana Tallinn* n.s. 2 (1992), 16–28. Fragments of a calendar (for May and June only) survive from the Birgittine nunnery near Reval: Paul Johansen, 'Kalendrikatkend Pirita kloostri', *Vana Tallinn* o.s. 3 (1938), 24–27.

varies widely, I will also outline the difficulties one should be aware of when conducting research on saints in Livonia.

The Virgin Mary: Patron Saint of Medieval Livonia

As repeatedly emphasized in the *Chronicon Livoniae* by Henry of Livonia (written about 1224–27), the German conversion and conquest of Livonia took place under the patronage of the Virgin Mary. In 1201 or 1202, when Bishop Albert von Buxhövdn moved the episcopal see from Üxküll (mod. Ikšķile, Latvia) to Riga, he ‘dedicated the episcopal cathedral with all of Livonia to Mary, the Blessed Mother of God’.¹⁰ From the same passage we learn that the convent in Üxküll, established by Bishop Meinhard, was already named after the Virgin.¹¹ The Mother of God was depicted on the banner of the crusaders,¹² and those who undertook the pilgrimage to Her land were miraculously healed.¹³ The patronage of Mary over Livonia is expressed by Henry several times.¹⁴ Perhaps the most important instance in this respect is his report on the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, where, according to Henry, Bishop Albert addressed the council as follows:

Holy Father, as you have not ceased to cherish the Holy Land of Jerusalem, the country of the Son, with your Holiness’ care, so also you ought not abandon Livonia, the land of the Mother, which has hitherto been among the pagans and far from the cares of your consolation and is now again desolate. For the Son loves His Mother and, as He would not care to lose His own land, so, too, He would not care to endanger His Mother’s land.

¹⁰ Henry of Livonia, *Heinrici Chronicon Livoniae*, ed. Leonid Arbusow and Albert Bauer (Darmstadt, 1959), ch. VI.3, p. 24: *cathedram episcopalem cum tota Lyvoniam beatissime Dei genitricis Marie honori deputavit*. Translation from *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, trans. James A. Brundage (Madison, Wis., 1961), p. 40.

¹¹ Cf. *Arnoldi Chronica Slavorum ex recensione I. M. Lappenbergii*, ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz (Hannover, 1868), ch. 5.30, p. 213: *Anno igitur verbi incarnate 1186 fundata est sedes episcopalis in Livonia a venerabili viro Meinhardo, intitulata patrocinio beate Dei genitricis Marie, in loco qui Riga dicitur*. Arnold of Lübeck, writing about 1210, did not know that the original location of the episcopal see was in Üxküll.

¹² Henry of Livonia, ch. XI.6, p. 78, ch. XII.3, p. 88, ch. XVI.4, p. 160. In some other cases, Henry uses the expression ‘under the banner of the Blessed Virgin’ metaphorically: see ch. XXIII.10, p. 252, ch. XXIV.2, p. 256.

¹³ Henry of Livonia, ch. XV.4, p. 136.

¹⁴ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIX.7, p. 196, ch. XXI.1, p. 210, ch. XXIII.10, p. 252, ch. XXV.2, pp. 268, 270, 272, ch. XXV.4, p. 276, ch. XXIX.8, p. 326.

To this Pope Innocent III replied: 'We shall always be careful to help with the paternal solicitude of our zeal the land of the Mother even as the land of the Son.'¹⁵ Thus it seems that the dedication of Livonia to the Mother of God was the initiative of Bishop Albert, who gained papal approval for this in Rome. Albert's aim was to make Livonia attractive for the crusaders and placing the land under the patronage of the Virgin was an effective means to sacralize it and make it comparable to the Holy Land. The conquest of Livonia took place in the period when the cult of the Virgin Mary in Europe had reached its peak, and this certainly favoured the dedication of the newly converted areas to her. In addition to the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia, there also exist other contemporary sources about the Virgin Mary's patronage of the country. In 1257 Albert Suerbeer, the archbishop of Riga, in a donation charter for the Cistercian nunnery in Riga, refers to the Virgin Mary 'to whom Livonia is specially dedicated' (*cui et ipsa Livonia specialiter ist dicata*).¹⁶ That Livonia was the 'property' of the Mother of God is also expressed in a letter of the Teutonic Order to the Roman Curia at the end of the fourteenth century.¹⁷

The image of the Blessed Virgin in Henry's chronicle is twofold: she is described on the one hand as a tender and loving mother to her 'children'; on the other hand as a protector of the crusaders in their battles and ruthless to her enemies (that is, above all, the pagans, the Danes and the Russians, who 'invade Her land' or 'hinder the faith').¹⁸ Such rhetoric is particularly understandable in the context of a missionary chronicle like Henry's whose aim was to describe the legitimacy of the Rigan (i.e. German) mission. The overwhelming role of the Virgin in conquest ideology and the placing of the country under her patronage were by no means specific to Livonia. Similar phenomena can also be traced elsewhere, most notably in the Iberian Peninsula, where, as Angus MacKay has said: 'the late medieval frontier was a Mariological one'.¹⁹

¹⁵ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIX.7, p. 196; *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, p. 152.

¹⁶ LUB 1/1, no. 300 (1 May 1257).

¹⁷ Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, p. 324.

¹⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXV.2, pp. 268, 270, 272 (see also ch. XXV.4, p. 276); *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, trans. Brundage, pp. 198–99, particularly the following lines: 'Behold how the Mother of God, so gentle to Her people who serve Her faithfully in Livonia, always defended them from all their enemies and how harsh She is with those who invade Her land or who try to hinder the faith and honor of Her Son in that land! See how many kings, and how mighty, She has afflicted! [...] And what kings whether of pagans or of Danes or of other nations, have fought against Livonia and have not perished? Consider and see, you princes of the Russians, or the pagans, or the Danes, or you elders of whatever people. Fear this gentle Mother of Mercy. Adore this Mother of God and give satisfaction to Her, Who takes such cruel revenge upon Her enemies.'

¹⁹ Angus MacKay, 'Religion, Culture, and Ideology on the Late Medieval Castilian-Granadan Frontier', in *Medieval Frontier Societies*, ed. Robert Bartlett and Angus MacKay (Oxford, 1988), pp. 217–43 (here 230).

Several major churches in Livonian cities were dedicated to the Virgin Mary. That she was the patron saint of the cathedral of Riga, as already mentioned, is reported in Henry's chronicle.²⁰ From other sources we learn that the anniversary of the dedication of the cathedral was the Assumption of the Virgin (15 August).²¹ There were, exceptionally, two high altars in the cathedral, both dedicated to the Virgin: one in the chancel, the other in the chapel of the Virgin in the north side of the church.²² Mary was also the patron saint of the cathedral and the cathedral chapter in Reval and Curonia.²³ Other cities and towns with a church dedicated to St Mary include Dorpat (mod. Tartu, Estonia), Narva, and Wesenberg (mod. Rakvere, Estonia). Altars, chapels or statues of the Virgin Mary existed in every larger church in Riga and Reval,²⁴ and possibly also in other towns. The cult of the Blessed Virgin was also very strong among the military orders active in Livonia: the Sword Brethren and the Teutonic Order, whose main patron saint she was.²⁵ The Virgin and Child were depicted on the banner of the Livonian Master of the Order.²⁶ The first paragraph in the regulations of the Livonian branch of the Order stresses that the Master had to guarantee the celebration of masses and horary prayers in honour of the Virgin in the convents.²⁷ Thus, the two main political rivals in late medieval Livonia, the Church of Riga and the Teutonic Order, 'shared' the same patron saint.

²⁰ Henry of Livonia, ch. VI.3, p. 24, ch. XIII.3, p. 100, ch. XVIII.6, p. 176. See also *LUB* 1/2, no. 723 (1 April 1326), as well as the seals of the cathedral and the cathedral chapter: *Est- und Livländische Brieflade 4: Siegel und Münzen*, ed. Johannes Sachssendahl (Reval, 1887), pp. 108–10, Tafel 27–28, no. 42.

²¹ Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, pp. 226, 327.

²² Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, pp. 327–28.

²³ *LUB* 1/2, no. 715 (16 Aug 1325). The cathedral of the Virgin Mary in Reval is referred to in several other sources as well (incl. testaments of the citizens). See also the seals of the bishops and the cathedral chapter: *Est- und Livländische Brieflade 4*, Tafel 31, 34, nos 26–27, Tafel G, nos 5–6. For Curonia, see *LUB* 1/1, no. 530 (Jan 1290); see also the seals of the bishops of Curonia: *Est- und Livländische Brieflade 4*, Tafel 45–46. No direct evidence survives about the patron saint of the cathedral in Hasenpoth.

²⁴ For Riga see Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, pp. 327–34. Altars of the major churches in Reval are listed in: Tiina Kala, 'Tallinna raad ja katoliku kirik reformatsiooni algaastail', in *Muinasaja loojangust omariikluse läveni: Pühendusteos Sulev Vahre 75. sünnipäevaks*, ed. Andres Andresen (Tartu, 2001), pp. 147–72 (here 156–60).

²⁵ In the later Middle Ages, two other saints also became highly venerated among the Teutonic Knights: St George and St Elizabeth of Thuringia. See Udo Arnold, 'Elisabeth und Georg als Pfarrpatrone im Deutschordensland Preußen: Zum Selbstverständnis des Deutschen Ordens', in *Elisabeth, der Deutsche Orden und ihre Kirche*, ed. Udo Arnold and Heinz Liebing (Marburg, 1983), pp. 163–85.

²⁶ Sven Ekdahl, *Die 'Banderia Prutenorum' des Jan Długosz – eine Quelle zur Schlacht bei Tannenberg 1410* (Göttingen, 1976), pp. 274–75.

²⁷ *LUB* 1/9, no. 275, § 1 (15 April 1438), no. 716, § 1 (28 April 1441).

The image of Mary as the protector of the land against the 'others' continued to be utilized throughout the Middle Ages. In the 1340s, due to increasing conflicts with the Pskovians, two fortresses, dedicated to St Mary, began to be erected on the border between Livonian and Russian territories. The castle of the Teutonic Order, located a little way from the border, was named Marienburg (mod. Alūksne, Latvia). The other – the mightiest fortress in the bishopric of Dorpat, was built directly on the border; the castle of Our Beloved Lady (MLG *unszer leven frouwen borch*), as it was originally named, became known as Neuhausen, the 'New Castle' (mod. Vastseliina, Estonia).²⁸ According to the chronicle of Bartholomäus Hoeneke, both fortresses were founded on the Annunciation of the Virgin (25 March) in 1342, but the date could have been deliberately chosen by the author.²⁹ However, it is a remarkable fact that the only fortresses in Livonia that are known to have been dedicated to the Virgin Mary were erected near the border against the 'schismatics', where her protection was perhaps most needed at that time. Since very little data survive on the chapels in the castles of the Teutonic Order, it is impossible to say how many of these were dedicated to the Virgin, but this was the case at least in the castle of Karkus (mod. Karksi, Estonia).³⁰

The cult of the Virgin Mary was also strongly promoted by monastic orders, particularly by the Cistercians, who played an important role in the Livonian mission,³¹ but also by the Dominicans and the Birgittines. Cistercian monasteries were usually dedicated to the Virgin Mary, although sometimes they had co-patrons as well, such as St Nicholas at Dünamünde (mod. Daugavgrīva, Latvia).³² The Virgin Mary was the original patron saint of the Cistercian nunnery in Riga, founded in the mid-thirteenth century; however, from the second half of the fourteenth century, the convent began to be referred to as that of St Mary Magdalene.³³ In the church of the Dominican friary in Reval (dedicated to St Catherine of Alexandria), there were at least three if not four altars of the Virgin Mary, and all the major feasts connected with the Virgin (and her mother Anne) were celebrated by the Dominicans as *totum duplex*.³⁴ All the Birgittine nunneries had to be dedicated to St Mary, and so too was the convent of Mariendal (Lat.

²⁸ Anti Selart, *Eesti idapiir keskajal* (Tartu, 1998), pp. 58–59.

²⁹ Bartholomäus Hoeneke *Liivimaa noorem riimkroonika*, ed. and trans. Sulev Vahre (Tallinn, 1960), p. 72.

³⁰ *Livländische Güterurkunden*, ed. Hermann von Bruiningk and Nicolaus Busch, 2 vols (Riga, 1908–23) 1, no. 305 (18 April 1441).

³¹ See Wolfgang Schmidt, *Die Zisterzienser im Baltikum und in Finnland* (Helsinki, 1941), pp. 20–32.

³² Henry of Livonia, ch. VI.3, p. 24; *Est- und Livländische Brieflade* 4, p. 112, Tafel 28, nos 53–55; Lore Poelchau, *Die Geschichte des Zisterzienserklosters Dünamünde bei Riga (1205–1305)* (St Ottilien, 2004), p. 10.

³³ *LUB* 1/1, no. 300; *LUB* 1/3, nos 283, 336. Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, p. 333. The Cistercian nunnery in Reval was dedicated to St Michael.

³⁴ Kala, 'Tallinna raad ja katoliku kirik', p. 160; Kala, 'The Church Calendar', p. 110.

Vallis Mariae) near Reval (actually dedicated to St Mary and St Birgitta), the only one of its kind in Livonia.³⁵

Although the patron saints of the parish churches in the countryside are rarely mentioned in medieval sources, it is clear that the number of churches and chapels dedicated to the Virgin Mary significantly surpassed those of other saints. In the territory of present-day Estonia, at least a dozen parish churches were dedicated to the Virgin Mary, whereas the saints next in popularity, such as St John the Baptist, St Nicholas, St Michael and St Martin, each had no more than five or six.³⁶ It can be added that the widespread tendency in the late Middle Ages of dedicating churches and altars to a particular event in a saint's life³⁷ can in Livonia be discerned only in the case of the Virgin Mary.³⁸

That the conquest of Livonia took place in the period when the cult of the Virgin was flourishing through Europe, that she became the patroness of the country and the main patron saint of the Teutonic Order and that her cult was strongly promoted by the monastic orders – all this must have influenced her enormous popularity as the patron saint of cathedrals, churches and altars. One might ask if the situation would have been radically different had Livonia not been dedicated to the Mother of God. If we look at some other regions in Europe, for instance Westphalia, Lower Saxony, Silesia or Finland, it is clear that she was the most popular patron saint there as well. In Silesia, where the patron of the country was St Hedwig, only ten churches were dedicated to her, but as many as fifty-eight to the Virgin Mary.³⁹ The bishopric of Åbo (mod. Turku, Finland), which covered the entire territory of medieval Finland, was dedicated to St Henry, the 'national saint' of Finland. Apart from the cathedral of Åbo and the church in Nousiainen, in which St Henry shared the patronage with the Virgin Mary, he was the patron saint of only two or three

³⁵ LUB 1/5, no. 2485 (9 July 1420); *Est- und Livländische Brieflade* 4, pp. 126–7, Tafel 34, nos 34–36.

³⁶ Cf. Lauri Vahtré, 'Keskaegsete maakirikute ja -kabelite nimipühakute kajastumine Eesti rahvakultuuris', *Kleio* 1 (1988), 38–45 (here 39). He has also included post-medieval parish churches.

³⁷ See, for example, Joseph Braun, *Der christliche Altar in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung*, 2 vols (München, 1924), 1: 729.

³⁸ The churches in Jegelecht (mod. Jõelähtme, Estonia) and Karulen (mod. Karula, Estonia) were dedicated to the Assumption of the Virgin, those in Klein St Marien (mod. Väike-Maarja, Estonia) and Merjama (mod. Märjamaa, Estonia) to the Nativity of the Virgin, the church in Paistel (mod. Paistu, Estonia) to the Annunciation, and the chapel in Maholm (mod. Viru-Nigula, Estonia) probably to the Visitation of the Virgin: MS Tartu, Eesti Ajalooarhiiv, collection (coll.) 1187, inventory (inv.) 2, no. 730, fol. 14r (Jegelecht); coll. 1187, inv. 2, no. 5166, fol. 2v (Merjama); Friedrich Georg von Bunge, 'Protocoll der Catholischen Kirchenvisitation in Livland vom Jahre 1613', *Archiv für die Geschichte Liv-, Est- und Curlands* 1 (1842), 23–77 (here 31, Karulen); Johan Köpp, *Kirik ja rahvas* (Lund, 1959), pp. 221–2; Hugo Richard Paucker, *Ehstlands Geistlichkeit* (Reval, 1849), p. 196.

³⁹ Heinrich Tukay, *Oberschlesien im Spannungsfeld zwischen Deutschland, Polen und Böhmen-Mähren* (Köln, 1976), pp. 281–84.

other churches or chapels,⁴⁰ whereas there were twenty-five churches dedicated to St Mary.⁴¹ The number of churches dedicated to the Mother of God in Lower Saxony and Westphalia amounted to hundreds and surpassed all the other saints.⁴² It would thus be too simplistic to claim that the enormous popularity of the Virgin Mary in Livonia was based on her patronage of the country; it was a far more complex phenomenon.

Patron Saints of Cathedrals and Bishoprics

By the late thirteenth century, the following four bishoprics existed in Livonia in addition to the archbishopric of Riga: Reval, Dorpat (mod. Tartu, Estonia), Ösel-Wiek with its centre in Hapsal (mod. Haapsalu, Estonia) and Curonia with its centre first at Hasenpoth (mod. Aizpute, Latvia), and from about 1300 in Piltene (mod. Piltene, Latvia).⁴³ In general, the patron saint of the cathedral, cathedral chapter and bishopric were identical. As noted above, the cathedrals in Riga and Reval and the cathedral chapter of Curonia were dedicated to the Virgin Mary. In the two latter cases we do not know if Mary was the only patron saint or if there were co-patrons, as in Riga. According to the breviary of the Rigan diocese from 1513, the co-patrons of the *ecclesiae Rigensis* were St Adalbert (bishop of Prague, d. 997) and St Augustine of Hippo.⁴⁴ The latter is not so surprising since the canons of Riga, at least during certain periods, followed the Augustinian rule.⁴⁵ In the cathedral of Riga there was also an altar dedicated to St Augustine.⁴⁶ However, there is no

⁴⁰ Tuomas Heikkilä, *Pyhän Henrikin legenda* (Helsinki, 2005), pp. 85–87.

⁴¹ Jukka Korpela, 'The Patronal Saints of the Medieval Finnish Churches and Altars', in *Saints of Europe: Studies towards a Survey of Cults and Culture*, ed. Graham Jones (Donington, 2003), pp. 199–209 (here 204).

⁴² *Die mittelalterlichen Kirchen- und Altarpatrozinien Niedersachsens*, ed. Hans-Walter Krumwiede (Göttingen, 1960), pp. 302–6; Heinrich Kampschulte, *Die westfälischen Kirchen-Patrocinien, besonders auch in ihrer Beziehung zur Geschichte der Einführung und Befestigung des Christentums in Westfalen* (Paderborn, 1867), pp. 185–86.

⁴³ *Baltische Länder: Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas*, ed. Gert von Pistohlkors (Berlin, 1994), p. 92. During the formation of the bishoprics in the earlier part of the thirteenth century, the name and/or centre of some of them changed. For details, see Tiina Kala, 'The Incorporation of the Northern Baltic Lands into the Western Christian World', in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, ed. Alan V. Murray (Aldershot, 2001), pp. 3–20 (here 10–12). The name Ösel-Wiek was invented by scholars in the nineteenth century; in the Middle Ages, the bishopric was usually referred to in Latin as *Osilia*. See Tiina Kala, 'Über das Schicksal des Bistums Ösel-Wiek', in *Saare-Lääne piiskopkond / Bistum Ösel-Wiek*, ed. Ülla Paras (Haapsalu, 2004), pp. 177–208 (here 177–78, n. 1).

⁴⁴ Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, pp. 149, 223–24, 348–49, 366.

⁴⁵ Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, pp. 12–13.

⁴⁶ Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, p. 366 (a reference from 1477); Hermann von Bruiningk, 'Die Altäre der Domkirche zu Riga im Mittelalter',

other evidence for the cult of St Adalbert in Riga (or elsewhere in Livonia).⁴⁷ It remains an open question when exactly these two saints became the co-patrons of the Church of Riga, or who stood behind the promotion of their cult.

The patron saints of the cathedrals and chapters of Dorpat and Hapsal are likewise referred to in medieval sources: in the case of the former, SS Peter and Paul,⁴⁸ and in the case of the latter, St John the Baptist and St John the Evangelist. However, since these medieval patrons were forgotten (as at Dorpat) or changed (as at Hapsal) in later centuries, and since confusion can still be encountered in the literature about this matter, we should briefly clarify the situation. One might assume that given the importance of the cathedral churches and their location in the larger cities, knowledge about their patron saints would persist even after the Reformation, but this was not necessarily the case. Dorpat suffered severely in the Russian–Livonian war (1558–83) and the cathedral was in ruins from the late sixteenth century. This may go a long way to explain why its patron saints were forgotten: in 1695, the chronicler Christian Kelch described the cathedral as that of St Dionysius,⁴⁹ and this assertion is repeated in later writings until about the end of the nineteenth century.⁵⁰ This is somewhat strange, given that the coat of arms of the city of Dorpat bears the keys of St Peter and the sword of St Paul.⁵¹ Perhaps they were only remembered as the patron saints of the city and not of the cathedral.

The story of the cathedral of Ösel-Wiek differs from that of Dorpat. The first cathedral, dedicated to St John the Evangelist, was founded in 1251 in Old Pernau (mod. Pärnu, Estonia), which at that time was the residence of the bishop.⁵² This cathedral was destroyed by the Lithuanians in 1263. Thereafter, the residence was moved to Hapsal, where the cathedral is first referred to in 1279.⁵³ This cathedral is

Sitzungsberichte der Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Altertumskunde der Ostseeprovinzen Russlands aus dem Jahre 1901 (1902), 8–13 (here 9).

⁴⁷ Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, p. 349.

⁴⁸ LUB 1/6, no. 2716 (8 January 1225), no. 2824 (21 November 1346); Arthur Motzki, 'Livonica aus den Supplikenregistern von Avignon (1342 Okt. 11–1366 Mai 9)', *Mitteilungen aus der livländischen Geschichte* 21 (1911–28), no. 24 (1346). See also the seals of the bishops and the cathedral chapter: *Est- und Livländische Briefflade* 4, Tafel 40–44.

⁴⁹ Christian Kelch, *Liefländische Historia* (Reval, 1695), p. 68.

⁵⁰ For example, August Wilhelm Hupel, *Topographische Nachrichten von Lief- und Ehistland*, 3 vols (Riga, 1774–82), 1: 254. The first to draw attention to the problem was Axel von Gernet, 'Zum Namen der Dorpater Domkirche', *Sitzungsberichte der Gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft* 1891 (1892), 93–99. There was an altar of St Dionysius in the cathedral of Dorpat, and Kelch's mistake could have been based on that knowledge. See LUB 1/6, no. 2941 (6 May 1397).

⁵¹ *Est- und Livländische Briefflade* 4, pp. 83–84, Tafel 18, nos 3–6, Tafel C, nos b–c; Arnold Feuereisen, 'Das Wappen der Stadt Dorpat: Seine historische Entwicklung und Rekonstruktion', *Jahrbuch für Genealogie, Heraldik und Sphragistik* 1907 und 1908 (1910), 4–16.

⁵² LUB 1/6, no. 2731 (1251), see also no. 2734 (24 Aug 1253).

⁵³ LUB 1/1, no. 461 (1279).

sometimes referred to in historical sources as that of St John the Evangelist,⁵⁴ and sometimes as that of St John the Evangelist *and* St John the Baptist.⁵⁵ Likewise, on the seals of the bishops of Ösel-Wiek we sometimes find both St Johns, and sometimes only the Evangelist.⁵⁶ It is possible that the Baptist became the second patron of the church only later on, from about the mid-fifteenth century. In any case, it seems that the patronage of the Evangelist was the stronger of the two and the one that was promoted more by (at least some of) the bishops.

In the post-medieval period there occurred a change in the patron saint. After a heavy storm in March 1726, when the cathedral lost its roof, the congregation moved to the city church of St Nicholas (built in the 1520s and first mentioned together with the patron saint in 1524⁵⁷) and took the name of St John with it. Since then, the city church has borne the name of St John. After the reconstruction works of the nineteenth century, the former cathedral church was dedicated to St Nicholas on 15 October 1889, thereby completing an exchange of patron saints between the two churches.⁵⁸ It is important to insist on these facts, as some scholars still take it that St Nicholas was the medieval patron saint of the cathedral in Hapsal.⁵⁹

The patrons chosen to be the protectors of the Livonian bishoprics belonged to the most powerful and well-known Christian saints. One may assume that the cult of the patron saint(s) of a cathedral was strongly promoted in the bishopric and that the feast day was celebrated more solemnly than those of the ordinary parish churches in the town or countryside. To what extent the cathedral's dedication influenced the choice of the patron saints of the parish churches in the bishopric is difficult to say. As mentioned above, the number of churches dedicated to the Virgin Mary in the region was higher than that for any other saint, but this may have less to do with her patronage of the country and three bishoprics than with the flourishing of her cult in late medieval Europe in general. In the bishopric of Ösel-Wiek there was only one church – the parish church in Goldenbeck (mod. Kullamaa, Estonia) – dedicated to St John (or to both St Johns).⁶⁰ It may well have been the case that the bishops were reluctant to dedicate the parish churches to the

⁵⁴ *LUB* 1/2, no. 667 (15 June 1319); *LUB* 1/7, no. 781 (17 Feb 1429).

⁵⁵ *LUB* 1/10, no. 562, § 5 (9 March 1449); *LUB* 2/1, no. 827 (11 June 1499).

⁵⁶ *Est- und Livländische Brieflade* 4, Tafel 37–39. Both St Johns first appear on the seal of Petrus Wetberch, bishop 1471–91 (Tafel 37, no. 13).

⁵⁷ MS København, Rigsarkivet, Fremmed proveniens, Lifland, Øsel stift, Registrant 1a, fol. 183v.

⁵⁸ MS Tartu, Eesti Ajalooarhiiv, coll. 1239, inv. 1, no. 21, fol. 28r. See also Anu Mänd and Kalev Jaago, 'Haapsalu toomkiriku kaitsepühakutest', *Lääne Elu* 3/72 (24 Jan 1991), pp. 1, 5.

⁵⁹ For instance, Lauri Vahtre, *Eestlase aeg: uurimus eesti rahvapärase ajaarvamise ajaloost*, 2nd rev. edn (Tallinn, 2000), p. 106; Vahtre, 'Keskaegsete maakirikute', p. 42.

⁶⁰ Leonid Arbusow, 'Livlands Geistlichkeit vom Ende des 12. bis ins 16. Jahrhundert, Dritter Nachtrag', *Jahrbuch für Genealogie, Heraldik und Sphragistik 1911–1912* (1913), 1–430 (here 329).

same saint(s) as the cathedral in order to avoid possible rivalry in attendance at Mass and the market on the feast day.

Patron Saints of Cities and the Cult of Soldier-Saints in Livonia

Our information on the medieval patron saints of the cities is mainly based on their coats of arms. Sometimes, as we have seen in the case of Dorpat, the patron saints of the cathedral also became the patron saints of the city. Hapsal chose only one of the patron saints of the cathedral to protect the city: its coat of arms displays the eagle of St John the Evangelist.⁶¹ In Riga, the patron saint of the city was not identical with that of the cathedral but with that of the most important parish church: St Peter. The crossed keys of St Peter are likewise to be found on the coat of arms of the city.⁶² The Virgin Mary or her rose can be seen on the coat of arms of Fellin (mod. Viljandi, Estonia).⁶³ She may have been chosen as patroness of the town because one of the most important castles of the Teutonic Order was located in Fellin. The patron saint of Lemsal (mod. Limbaži, Latvia) was apparently St Laurence, because he (or, later on, his main attribute, a gridiron) is depicted on the coat of arms.⁶⁴ Apart from these examples, there is very little evidence on the medieval patron saints of Livonian urban centres. After the Reformation they were gradually forgotten, and since there are very few documentary sources preserved from the smaller towns, it is virtually impossible to trace them. We cannot even be certain if every smaller town had a patron saint.

Strangely enough, the identity of the patron saint of Reval, the second largest city in Livonia, had been totally forgotten in the post-medieval period, and was rediscovered only in 2003. A comparison of the written sources with iconographical evidence (particularly the reredos of the high altars of two Reval churches) led to the conclusion that it was St Victor. In fact, the cult of two distinct Victors, of Marseilles and of Xanten respectively, had become conflated in Reval: on the high altar of the Church of St Nicholas one can recognize the legend of St Victor of Marseilles (Fig. 10.1), whereas the feast day celebrated in Reval was that of St Victor of Xanten (10 October). In addition to the surviving altarpieces and goldsmiths' works where images of St Victor can be found, there is evidence on altars and statues of St Victor in the written sources. His cult was particularly strong among the two merchants' corporations in Reval, but there also existed a religious guild dedicated to St Victor. In 1487, the city council had three statues of

⁶¹ *Est- und Livländische Briefflade* 4, p. 85, Tafel 18, no. 7.

⁶² *Est- und Livländische Briefflade* 4, p. 91, Tafel 20, nos 21–23; Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, pp. 522–23.

⁶³ *Est- und Livländische Briefflade* 4, p. 91, Tafel 20, nos 25–27.

⁶⁴ *Est- und Livländische Briefflade* 4, Tafel 19, nos 9–10; Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, p. 459.



Fig. 10.1 Reredos of the high altar of St Nicholas's church in Reval, 1478–81, workshop of Hermen Rode in Lübeck. 2nd position. The eight scenes on the left depict the legend of St Nicholas, the patron of the church, and the eight scenes on the right – the legend of St Victor, the patron saint of the city (here depicted as St Victor of Marseilles). In the scene where St Nicholas saves the ship of the Hanseatic merchants, one can see the coats of arms of the Great Guild and the Brotherhood of the Black Heads. Photo: S. Stepashko. © The Art Museum of Estonia, Tallinn.

St Victor placed at the city gates. According to a chronicle written by a councillor, Johann Gellinckhusen, the city council celebrated St Victor's Day with a feast.⁶⁵

Both Victors were comparatively little known in the German territories or in the Baltic Sea region in general, and their feast days usually belonged to those of the lower categories. In Reval, 10 October was celebrated as a *festum duplex*.⁶⁶ The reason why St Victor, a military saint, was chosen as the patron saint of a Hanseatic city is not yet clear. Perhaps Reval had at some point acquired relics of the saint? Thus far, no evidence on this has been found in written sources. The cult of St Victor seems to have been specific to Reval: no data on his veneration have survived elsewhere in Livonia. It is, however, noteworthy that St Victor was not the only soldier-saint strongly venerated in merchant-dominated Reval: so, too, were St George and St Maurice. The Great Guild of the merchants had its most important altar dedicated to SS Blasius, Victor and George.⁶⁷ From St Maurice, reputedly a black soldier, derived the name of the Brotherhood of the Black Heads, an association of unmarried merchants and journeymen.⁶⁸ The head of St Maurice is also depicted on their coat of arms. In 1481, the Reval Black Heads bought an antependium from Bruges, decorated with the images of SS Victor and Maurice.⁶⁹ On the central panel of their surviving altarpiece, one can see St George, the Virgin and Child, and St Victor. For the Black Heads in Riga, St George was the most important saint. In 1487, they endowed a Mass at the Church of St Peter in honour of SS George, Maurice, Gertrude, Francis and Reinold.⁷⁰ A wooden statue of St George, containing a relic of the saint, stood on their altar, and in 1503 the confraternity decided to order a silver reliquary of the saint, likewise intended for their altar.⁷¹ Three wooden sculptures from the mid-fifteenth century depicting SS George, Maurice and Gertrude, that had probably belonged to an altarpiece of the Black Heads, have been preserved. On the side stones (*Beischlagsteine*) from 1522 of their confraternity house stood the Virgin Mary and St Maurice.⁷²

⁶⁵ Mänd, 'The Patron Saint of Medieval Tallin', pp. 360–64.

⁶⁶ Kala, 'Tallinna dominiiklaste kalender', pp. 18, 24.

⁶⁷ Mänd, 'The Patron Saint of Medieval Tallin', p. 364.

⁶⁸ On the Black Heads (and the Great Guild) in major Livonian cities, see Anu Mänd, *Urban Carnival: Festive Culture in the Hanseatic Cities of the Eastern Baltic, 1350–1550* (Turnhout, 2005), pp. 29–38.

⁶⁹ Mänd, 'Über den Marienaltar', p. 232.

⁷⁰ Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, pp. 62, 418.

⁷¹ Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, pp. 418–20. The latter, a silver reliquary from 1507, has been preserved and is nowadays kept in the Roselius-Haus in Bremen. *Der Silberschatz der Compagnie der Schwarzen Häupter aus Riga*, ed. Maria Anczykowski (Bremen, 1997), pp. 32–37.

⁷² *Melngalvju nams Rīgā / Das Schwarzhäupterhaus in Riga / The Blackheads House in Riga*, ed. Māra Siliņa (Riga, 1995), pp. 37, 196–97, 200–201.

Thus, it is clear that, although the merchants' associations in Riga and Reval also venerated other saints, the 'military' ones had a very prominent position.⁷³ Naturally, the cult of SS George and Maurice was not limited to the merchants. St Maurice, for instance, played a very important role in the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order, being depicted on their banner (as we have seen, the Virgin Mary was depicted on the other side).⁷⁴ St George was the patron saint of the Sword Brethren and their chapel in Riga was named after him (later on, after their incorporation into the Teutonic Order, the chapel passed on to the Teutonic Knights).⁷⁵ However, St George was highly venerated by other social layers as well, and featured rather frequently as the patron saint of churches and altars. One is certainly tempted to link the roots of the strong cult of the soldier-saints to the thirteenth-century crusade (and this may indeed be partly the case) but one should not forget that there was usually more than one factor that determined the saints' cults. Therefore, the role of the soldier-saints in different layers of the Livonian society and the reasons for their veneration definitely require further research.

Churches in the Hanseatic Cities

The patron saint of a rural church or a castle was usually chosen by the owner of the land and the initiator of the building: a bishop, a monastery, the nobility or the Teutonic Order. In towns, especially in the late Middle Ages, the role of the citizens, particularly of merchants, grew in this respect. Since the Livonian towns belonged to different lords, they had very little in common politically. The connecting factor was their membership of the Hanseatic League. The most important Hanseatic towns in Livonia were Riga, Reval and Dorpat, but in addition to these there was also Fellin, New Pernau, Wolmar (mod. Valmiera, Latvia), Wenden (mod. Cēsis, Latvia) and some others.⁷⁶

The Hanse or the merchants, unlike some crafts, did not venerate one particular saint. However, scholars have pointed out that some saints appear more frequently than others as the patron saints of churches and chapels in the Hanseatic towns, and therefore one can speak of certain 'Hanseatic saints'. These included the Virgin

⁷³ For more on the subject, see Hermann von Bruiningk, 'Die Schutzheiligen der Kompanie der Schwarzhäupter in Riga', *Sitzungsberichte der Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Altertumskunde der Ostseeprovinzen Russlands aus dem Jahre 1901* (1902), 33–35; Anu Mänd, 'Hans Bouwer, kaupmees', in Tiina Kala, Juhan Kreem and Anu Mänd, *Kümme keskaegset tallinlast* (Tallinn, 2006), pp. 60–89 (here 67–68, 70).

⁷⁴ Ekdahl, *Die 'Banderia Prutenorum'*, pp. 276–77.

⁷⁵ Friedrich Benninghoven, *Der Orden der Schwertbrüder: Fratres Milicie Christi de Livonia* (Köln, 1965), p. 64; Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, p. 414.

⁷⁶ *Baltische Länder*, p. 110.

Mary, St Peter, St Nicholas and St James the Greater.⁷⁷ Their churches can be found in most important Hanse towns in German territories, such as Lübeck, Hamburg and Danzig (mod. Gdańsk, Poland), in Visby on Gotland and also in medieval Livonia. Some churches founded on the initiative of the merchants functioned not only as places of worship but also as storehouses. For instance, the Church of St Peter of the German merchants in Novgorod has often been presented as a classic example of the *ecclesia mercatorum*.⁷⁸

It has been pointed out that the merchants, when founding a church in a foreign land, often preferred to name it after the patron saint of their home church: for instance, the Scandinavian merchants had their Church of St Olaf in Novgorod, and the Danish churches in London and Visby were dedicated to St Clement.⁷⁹ However, knowing the preferences towards certain saints of merchants from certain regions, one should not automatically conclude that all churches dedicated to St Nicholas in the Hanseatic cities were founded by German merchants, or all churches of St Olaf by Scandinavian ones. This has, unfortunately, been the case in Reval, where the two late medieval parish churches, St Olaf and St Nicholas, have been declared to have been founded by Scandinavian and German merchants.⁸⁰ However, recent research has shown that the founders of the Church of St Nicholas (and likewise the exact time of the foundation) are not known,⁸¹ and that the Church of St Olaf was originally not a parish church, but most probably erected on the initiative of the Danish royal house, since its *ius patronatus* belonged first to the Danish kings and, from 1267, to the Cistercian nunnery in Reval.⁸²

One of the major problems with Livonian churches (in towns as well as in the countryside) is that in most cases we do not know the time of their foundation or who stood behind it. In general, we also do not know whether a church had more than one or two patron saints, since the co-patrons were normally listed only in the consecration charters.⁸³ This makes it difficult to study the preferences toward

⁷⁷ Matthias Zender, 'Heiligenverehrung im Hanseraum', *Hansische Geschichtsblätter* 92 (1974), 1–15 (here 10–13); Rainer Postel, 'Kirche und religiöses Leben', in *Die Hanse: Lebenswirklichkeit und Mythos*, ed. Jörgen Bracker, 2 vols (Hamburg, 1989), 1: 426.

⁷⁸ Paul Johansen, 'Die Kaufmannskirche im Ostseegebiet', in *Studien zu den Anfängen des europäischen Städtewesens: Vorträge und Forschungen* 4 (Lindau, 1958), pp. 499–525 (here 499–503).

⁷⁹ Zender, 'Heiligenverehrung', p. 3.

⁸⁰ Johansen, 'Die Kaufmannskirche', pp. 505–7; Paul Johansen and Heinz von zur Mühlen, *Deutsch und Undeutsch im mittelalterlichen und frühneuzeitlichen Reval* (Köln, 1973), pp. 40–41.

⁸¹ *Kui vana on Tallinn?*, ed. Tiina Kala (Tallinn, 2004), pp. 109–10.

⁸² Tiina Kala, 'Ludeke Karwel, kogudusevaimulik', in Tiina Kala, Juhan Kreem and Anu Mänd, *Kümme keskaegset tallinlast* (Tallinn, 2006), pp. 150–76 (here 155).

⁸³ Very few such charters have survived. For instance, the church of St John's hospital near Reval was in 1449 dedicated to St John the Baptist, the blessed Elias and St Jodok: *LUB* 1/10, no. 649 (17 Aug 1449). The church of the Cistercian monastery in Paddis

certain saints among particular social layers, and the popularity of individual saints at certain periods in time.

Returning to the saints frequently appearing in Hanseatic cities, it is perhaps important to point out that the image of a saint constantly developed. For instance, in the late Middle Ages, additional functions were ascribed to certain saints in order to make them more 'suitable' or to bring them mentally closer to some professions or social groups. For instance, in the Hanseatic region, the role of St Peter as a fisherman was particularly emphasized, and the designation of the Virgin Mary as Star of the Sea (Lat. *stella maris*) may have increased her popularity among seafarers.⁸⁴ Her mother, St Anne, was also known as a maritime patroness.⁸⁵

One of the best-known patrons of the merchants and seafarers was certainly St Nicholas, whose cult reached an unprecedented popularity in the Hanseatic region. Churches dedicated to St Nicholas existed in such important cities as Lübeck, Hamburg, Rostock, Visby, Danzig, Stralsund and so on. Quite frequently they were religious centres of the seafarers and their organizations. For example, in St Nicholas's Church in Hamburg, a special Mass was celebrated for the protection of seafarers (*missa prima nautarum*).⁸⁶ In the Livonian Hanseatic towns, churches of St Nicholas existed in Reval and New Pernau. In Riga, Reval and Dorpat, there were also Russian churches of St Nicholas.⁸⁷ The role of St Nicholas as a patron saint of merchants and seafarers becomes particularly visible in works of art: on a panel of the high altar of the church in Reval he is saving a ship (Fig. 10.1), and on a stone sculpture in the church of Karris (mod. Karja, Estonia) in Ösel, a merchant, probably saved from a storm, offers his ship to St Nicholas in gratitude.⁸⁸

Another characteristic of the Hanseatic towns is the cult of St Gertrude of Nivelles. From the end of the thirteenth century, and particularly after the Black Death, a new wave of her cult spread from the region of Mecklenburg and Pomerania and reached the Baltic region as well. Gertrude was regarded as the

(mod. Padise, Estonia) was dedicated to the Holy Cross, St John the Baptist, St John the Evangelist, SS Bartholomew, Laurence, Nicholas, Bernard, Benedict, Anthony, Catherine, Barbara, Mary Magdalene, Anne and, finally, to all saints: *LUB* 1/10, no. 511 (30 Nov 1448). Both lists begin with the Holy Trinity and the Virgin Mary, but it was customary to name them before the actual patron saints.

⁸⁴ Zender, 'Heiligenverehrung', p. 4.

⁸⁵ Virginia Nixon, *Mary's Mother: Saint Anne in Late Medieval Europe* (Philadelphia, 2004), p. 18.

⁸⁶ Zender, 'Heiligenverehrung', p. 11.

⁸⁷ In Dorpat, which was geographically closer to the Russian territories, there were two Russian churches: St Nicholas of the Pskovians and St George of the Novgorodians. Kaur Altoa, 'Das Russische Ende im mittelalterlichen Dorpat (Tartu)', *Steinbrücke* 1 (1998), 31–42. See also Chapter 13 by Anti Selart in the present volume.

⁸⁸ This sculpture group of Karris has most recently been analysed in Helen Bome and Kersti Markus, 'Karja kirik – kõige väiksem "katedraal"', *Kunstiteaduslikke Uurimusi* 4 (2005), 9–51 (here 23–24).

patron saint of travellers and pilgrims, but she was also venerated as the founder of hospitals and a protector against the plague. In the fifteenth century, one can find a church or a chapel of St Gertrude in almost every town around the Baltic Sea. Chapels of Gertrude were usually located at the harbour, before the city gates or at the cemeteries. In Reval, there existed a guild of St Gertrude, presumably uniting ships' captains and foreign travellers, and a chapel of St Gertrude stood near the harbour.⁸⁹ Towards the end of the fifteenth century Michael Hildebrand, the archbishop of Riga, donated to Reval a relic of St Gertrude which, if dipped in water, was a help against the plague, fever and forbidden love. In 1506, he demanded it back with the excuse that the Revalians had not used it during the plague epidemic, and had a special chapel built for the precious relic in Riga.⁹⁰ In addition to Reval and Riga, a St Gertrude's chapel also existed near the Coast Gate in New Pernau.⁹¹

A well-known patron saint of pilgrims and other travellers was undoubtedly St James the Greater, whose veneration culminated in the thirteenth–fourteenth centuries. In Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland, most churches and depictions of St James can be found in the regions characterized by active international trade and mercantile activity.⁹² It has been claimed that the Hanseatic League played an important role in the spread of the cult of St James, and that his church was to be found in every important harbour town. Unlike in France and Spain, where the saint was mainly known as the patron of pilgrims, St James was venerated in the Hanseatic region as a special patron of merchants and seafarers: there is evidence of that, for instance, from Visby, Hamburg and Rostock.⁹³ In the Livonian Hanseatic towns, the Church of St James in Riga was one of the parish churches, and there was a Church of St James in Dorpat too.

However, it would be simplifying matters to connect all these churches exclusively to merchants or assume that they were necessarily founded by them. Warnings against assuming such stereotypical attitudes towards certain saints in Livonia have also been expressed before, in the form of demonstrations that the cult of saints such as Olaf, Maurice, James and Nicholas was equally high among the crusaders, the Teutonic Knights and the merchants, and that for instance the Teutonic Order played as important a role in spreading the cult of these saints as

⁸⁹ LUB 1/11, no. 158 (1451); Johansen and Mühlen, *Deutsch und Undeutsch*, p. 67; Valdeko Vende, 'Gertrudi kirik', *Vana Tallinn* n.s. 4 (1994), 14–21.

⁹⁰ LUB 2/3, no. 26 (19 March 1506); Arbusow, *Die Einführung der Reformation*, p. 97.

⁹¹ Heinrich Laakmann, *Geschichte der Stadt Pernau in der Deutsch-Ordenszeit* (Marburg, 1956), pp. 42, 57; *Pärnu linna ajaloo allikad 13.–16. sajandini / Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Pernau 13.–16. Jahrhundert*, ed. Inna Põltsam and Aldur Vunk (Pärnu, 2001), p. 127, no. 21.

⁹² Christian Krötzel, *Pilger, Mirakel und Alltag: Formen des Verhaltens im skandinavischen Mittelalter* (Helsinki, 1994), p. 113.

⁹³ Zender, 'Heiligenverehrung', p. 11.

did the merchants.⁹⁴ One should thus be very careful in stressing the uniformity of the cult of saints in the Hanseatic region. The veneration of saints changed in time and space, and one should always consider the different factors influencing the cult of a given saint in a particular period.

The Cults of 'Scandinavian' Saints

The same stereotypes should be avoided when studying the cults of 'Scandinavian' saints in Livonia, for some scholars have stressed the particular importance of merchants in mediating their cults. In Reval, there exists evidence for the veneration of five 'Nordic' saints: Olaf, Knud, Henry of Finland, Magnus of Orkney and Birgitta of Sweden. The Church of St Olaf had an altar dedicated to Olaf, whose *ius patronatus* belonged to the Great Guild.⁹⁵ The same guild also took care of the altar of St Magnus in the same church.⁹⁶ However, the cult of St Olaf was not limited to merchants: there were two artisans' guilds in the city (St Olaf and St Knud), both probably founded in the thirteenth century.⁹⁷ St Knud's Guild had altars of Knud in St Olaf's Church and in St Nicholas's Church, and a silver statue of the saint in the guildhall.⁹⁸ St Olaf is depicted on the reredos of the high altar of the Church of the Holy Spirit in Reval (Fig. 10.2), and his feast was celebrated by the Dominicans as *totum duplex*. The latter circumstance was probably due to Olaf's great importance in Reval, since the Dominicans elsewhere did not celebrate his feast (nor did it exist in the calendars of German bishoprics).⁹⁹

It is not known when the altar of St Henry in St Olaf's Church was founded: the first known record of it survives from 1405.¹⁰⁰ According to a document from 1449, its *ius patronatus* belonged to the heirs of the merchant Gerd van der

⁹⁴ Niels von Holst, 'Olaf – Mauritius – Jakobus – Nikolaus: Schutzheilige der Christen Altivlands in heidnischer Umwelt oder neutrale Förderer von Handel und Verkehr?', *Jahrbuch des baltischen Deutschtums* 25 (1978), 71–82.

⁹⁵ *Das Revaler Pergament Rentenbuch 1382–1518*, ed. Artur Plaesterer (Reval, 1930), no. 635 (1421); MS Tallinn, Tallinna Linnaarhiiv, coll. 191, inv. 2, no. 16, pp. 41, 57, 58, 80.

⁹⁶ *Das Revaler Pergament Rentenbuch*, no. 554 (1426); MS Tallinn, Tallinna Linnaarhiiv, coll. 191, inv. 2, no. 16, pp. 149, 163.

⁹⁷ On these guilds, see Mänd, *Urban Carnival*, pp. 38–39; Anu Mänd, 'Tallinna Kanuti gild ja selle oldermannid keskajal', *Vana Tallinn* n.s. 16 (2005), 129–57. It is not certain to which Knud (the king [d. 1086] or his nephew, the duke Knud Lavard) the guild was originally dedicated, but from the fourteenth century onwards it was regarded as being King Knud (pp. 133–34).

⁹⁸ For details, see Mänd, 'Tallinna Kanuti gild', pp. 134–36. St Knud's altar in the Church of St Nicholas was occasionally called St Mary's altar.

⁹⁹ Kala, 'Tallinna dominiiklaste kalender', pp. 18, 23.

¹⁰⁰ *Das Revaler Pergament Rentenbuch*, no. 410.



Fig. 10.2. Reredos of the high altar of the Holy Spirit Church in Reval, 1483, workshop of Bernt Notke in Lübeck, commissioned by the city council of Reval. In the corpus: the miracle of Pentecost; on the left wing: St Olaf, St Anne with the Virgin and Child; on the right wing: St Elizabeth of Thuringia, St Victor. Photo: S. Stepashko.

Linden; hence, it was probably a private altar.¹⁰¹ There are regular entrances on St Henry's altar in the city books of Reval until the Reformation. It has previously been assumed that it was dedicated not to St Henry of Finland, but to Henry II, Holy Roman emperor, but this seems highly unlikely, particularly in the context of Reval, where the aforementioned Nordic saints were so well known.¹⁰² The only other piece of evidence on the cult of St Henry in Reval is a reference from 1518 to a silver statue of the saint which belonged to the goldsmiths' guild.¹⁰³ St Birgitta was, next to the Virgin Mary, the patron saint of the Birgittine convent of

¹⁰¹ LUB 1/10, no. 566. Later, the *ius patronatus* passed to the heirs of the merchant Evert van der Linden: *Das Revaler Pergament Rentenbuch*, no. 1007.

¹⁰² Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, p. 431. See also Heikkilä, *Pyhän Henrikin legenda*, pp. 124–25.

¹⁰³ MS Tallinn, Tallinna Linnaarhiiv, coll. 190, inv. 2, no. 82, fol. 16r (1518): *in der laden en sulueren bild sunte Hinrices van 6.5 mr. lodich*. This statue did not belong to any

Mariendal near Reval, founded in the early fifteenth century.¹⁰⁴ She is also one of the female saints depicted on the reredos of the high altar of the Church of St Nicholas (Fig. 10.3). The cults of SS Knud, Magnus and Henry of Finland probably did not spread south to Reval: there is no trace of their veneration elsewhere in Livonia. The cult of St Olaf was more universal: there were chapels dedicated to him in Estonia, and in Riga there was a Guild of St Olaf, one of the religious guilds in the city that were dissolved after the Reformation.¹⁰⁵ The veneration of St Birgitta reached Riga, too: in the Church of St Peter there was a chapel and a chantry in her honour.¹⁰⁶

That more 'Northern' saints were known in Reval than elsewhere in Livonia is naturally related to its geographical closeness to Scandinavia and to economic connections, as well as to the fact that until 1346 the city belonged to the Danish Crown. Only the cults of more universal saints, who were well known in late medieval Europe, reached the southern part of Livonia. Although the merchants may have played an important part in spreading the cult of the aforementioned saints, they were obviously not the only factor.

Livonian 'Jeruselems'

Near some Livonian cities or castles there existed a place called Jerusalem. Quite probably, these 'Jeruselems' were chapels, although only some of them are indeed specified as such in the historical sources. In Reval there were two Jeruselems, both located outside the city walls: the first is usually described as 'behind St Anthony' (i.e. behind the Tönnisberg),¹⁰⁷ the other 'at the Fischermay'.¹⁰⁸ Both of them appear in the sources comparatively late, from the early sixteenth century.¹⁰⁹

altar of the goldsmiths, but was kept by the alderman in the guild's chest. See also Adolf Friedenthal, *Die Goldschmiede Revals* (Lübeck, 1931), p. 13.

¹⁰⁴ LUB 1/5, no. 2485; *Est- und Livländische Brieflade* 4, pp. 126–27, Tafel 34, nos 34–36.

¹⁰⁵ Constantin Mettig, 'Über die St. Olavgilde in Riga', *Sitzungsberichte der Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Altertumskunde der Ostseeprovinzen Russlands aus dem Jahre 1904* (1905), 16–20; Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, pp. 498–99.

¹⁰⁶ Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, p. 375.

¹⁰⁷ Tönnisberg, literally the 'hill of St Anthony' (Est. Tõnismäe) was a small hill in the suburb of Reval where the chapel of St Anthony stood.

¹⁰⁸ Fischermay (Est. Kalamaja) was a suburb of Reval which was mainly inhabited by fishermen, predominantly of Estonian origin.

¹⁰⁹ The Jerusalem behind the Tönnisberg is better known than the other. At least three citizens of Reval (all of them merchants) bequeathed money to this place: Hinrick Horneyt 10 marks in 1503 (MS Tallinn, Tallinna Linnaarhiiv, coll. 230, inv. 1-III b, no. 55), Hans Bouwer 5 marks in 1519 (Tallinna Linnaarhiiv, coll. 230, inv. 1-III b, no. 75) and Hans Hosserinck 5 marks in 1521 (Tallinna Linnaarhiiv, coll. 230, inv. 1, no. BN 1 Hosserinck). The place, 'Jerusalem Hill', is mainly known in Estonian historiography as the location

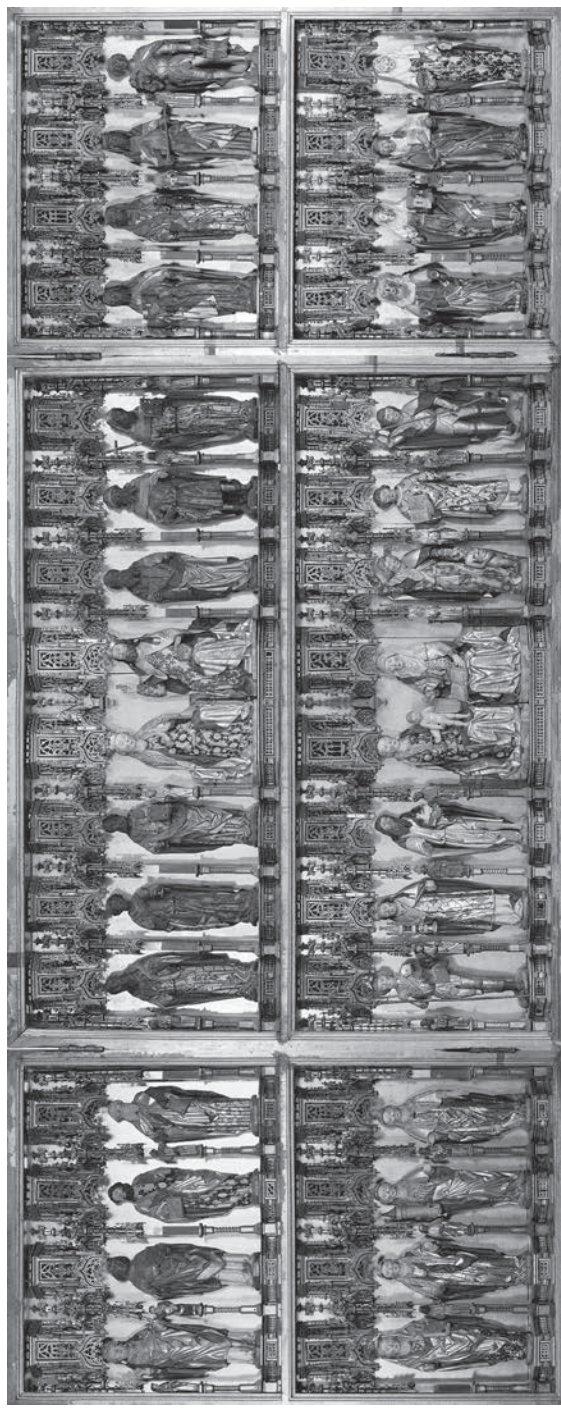


Fig. 10.3 Reredos of the high altar of St Nicholas's Church of Reval with the opened wings. The upper row depicts the patron saints of the church and of the city, and the twelve apostles; in the lower row one can see several well-known saints in Reval. Upper row: SS Nicholas, Matthew, Bartholomew, Thomas, Andrew, John the Evangelist, Peter, Coronation of the Virgin, SS Paul, James the Greater, Philip, Simon, Jude or James the Lesser, Matthias, Victor. Lower row: SS Apollonia, Dorothy, Barbara, Catherine of Alexandria, Reinold, Blasius, John the Baptist, St Anne with the Virgin and Child, SS Michael, Laurence, George, Mary Magdalene, Gertrude, Birgitta of Sweden, Elizabeth of Thuringia. Photo: S. Stepashko. © The Art Museum of Estonia, Tallinn.

A once existent chapel 'of the crusaders', called Jerusalem, is recorded near the town of Fellin in 1599.¹¹⁰ Another Jerusalem (as well as a Bethlehem) existed near the town of New Pernau. In the vicinity of the castle of Dünaburg (in mod. Daugavpils district, Latvia) there were chapels of Jerusalem and of Bethlehem, and in Hapsal there was a street called Jerusalem, which once possibly had led to a holy place as well.¹¹¹

It has previously been assumed that the Jerusalem chapels were local pilgrimage places, founded by the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order, and mainly for the needs of the Teutonic Knights.¹¹² This assumption is probably based on the 1599 Fellin reference, and on the fact that most of the Jerusalems were situated near the towns or settlements where there was a castle of the Order: Reval, Fellin, New Pernau and Dünaburg. In addition, Jerusalem chapels are also known to have existed near some Prussian towns which were important centres of the Order, such as Königsberg (mod. Kaliningrad, Russia), Elbing (mod. Elbląg, Poland) and Marienburg (mod. Malbork, Poland).¹¹³

However, if one looks at the wider European context, it is clear that the chapels of Jerusalem were founded by very different social groups or even individuals. In Paris and in several towns in the Low Countries, such chapels were usually erected by a group of former pilgrims who had visited Jerusalem, and on their return formed a brotherhood named after Jerusalem or the Holy Sepulchre. In some cities, as in Paris and Utrecht, these brotherhoods also admitted people who had not gone on a pilgrimage. The earliest references to such brotherhoods originate from the fourteenth century, but most of them were founded during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.¹¹⁴ Chapels of Jerusalem were mainly erected as

of a battle in the Russian–Livonian war. See Jüri Kivimäe, 'Das Scharmützel hinter dem Jerusalemer Berg Anno 1560', in *Tallinna mustpead: Mustpeade vennaskonna ajaloost ja varadest / Die Revaler Schwarzenhäupter: Geschichte und Schätze der Bruderschaft der Schwarzenhäupter*, ed. Juhan Kreem and Urmas Oolup (Tallinn, 1999), pp. 67–83. The Jerusalem Hill was still extant in the late seventeenth century: see p. 77, and also ill. 2 on p. 27. The Jerusalem at the Fischermay is referred to in only one testament, that of Hans Bouwer from 1519 (see above). The only other reference known to me originates from 1539 (Tallinna Linnaarhiiv, coll. 230, inv. 1, no. Ab 1, p. 325); at that time, the chapel still existed.

¹¹⁰ *Polska XVI wieku pod względem geograficzko-statystycznym*, 13: *Inflanty*, ed. J. Jakubowski and J. Kordzikowski (Warszawa, 1915), p. 174; 'Viljandi linn 1599', trans. Katrin Vabamäe, *Viljandi Muuseumi aastaraamat 1998* (1999), 114–62 (here 116–17).

¹¹¹ Paul Johansen, 'Saksa kohanimedest Eestis' (originally published in 1930), in Johansen, *Kaugete aegade sära*, ed. Jüri Kivimäe (Tartu, 2005), pp. 24–49 (here 40).

¹¹² Friedrich Amelung, *Revaler Alterthümer* (Reval, 1884), pp. 62–66; Johansen and Mühlen, *Deutsch und Undeutsch*, p. 89; Johansen, 'Saksa kohanimedest Eestis', pp. 39–40; Kivimäe, 'Das Scharmützel', p. 77.

¹¹³ Amelung, *Revaler Alterthümer*, p. 65.

¹¹⁴ Wolfgang Schneider, *Peregrinatio Hierosolymitana: Studien zum spätmittelalterlichen Jerusalembrauchtum und zu den aus der Heiliglandfahrt*

separate buildings, but in some cases they were attached to a cathedral or a parish church. The architecture of the Jerusalem chapels imitated that of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem in Palestine, and the 'tomb of Christ' was almost an obligatory feature of their interior.¹¹⁵

Not all the chapels of Jerusalem were founded by or connected to Jerusalem pilgrims, however. Since only a few individuals could actually undertake a journey to the Holy Land, it became popular in Europe from the fourteenth century onwards to create 'local Jerusalems', that is, chapels of that name, mounts of Calvary, roads to Calvary with the Stations of the Cross and so forth. These were places of devotion and pilgrimage, accessible to broader segments of the population. For instance, in Lübeck it was a local city councillor who in 1468 had crosses, referring to those at Golgotha, erected on a hill near the city, and the place became known as the hill of Jerusalem.¹¹⁶

Due to the lack of sources, we do not know when the Livonian 'Jerusalems' were founded or by whom, and what they looked like. It seems doubtful that the two Jerusalems near Reval were erected by the Teutonic Order since neither of them was situated on the territory of the Order, but on that of the city, and in 1520 a city councillor, Johann Eckholt, is mentioned as a warden of one Jerusalem.¹¹⁷ In addition, as noted above, local merchants bequeathed money to these Jerusalems (although this does not necessarily imply that the chapels were erected on the initiative of the city). Since too few sources on these Livonian Jerusalems have survived, many questions must remain unanswered. However, it is evident that one should consider the phenomenon of erecting such Jerusalems in the context not only of local cults and pilgrimages but in the wider European context.

Patron Saints of Rural Churches and the Cult of St Anne

Prior to the Reformation there were about eighty parish churches in the territory of present-day Estonia.¹¹⁸ The medieval sources specify the patron saint in only twelve cases. This should cause no surprise: in the cities where there were several churches and chapels it was essential to differentiate among them in documents by referring to their patron saint(s), while in the case of the parish churches in the countryside it was usual to refer to the place-name.

hervorgegangenen nordwesteuropäischen Jerusalembruderschaften (Münster, 1982), pp. 28–29, 82, 165.

¹¹⁵ Schneider, *Peregrinatio Hierosolymitana*, pp. 123–24.

¹¹⁶ Schneider, *Peregrinatio Hierosolymitana*, pp. 229–32.

¹¹⁷ MS Tallinn, Tallinna Linnaarhiiv, coll. 230, inv. 1, no. BN 1 (Hans Bouwer), fol. 3r.

¹¹⁸ This section was mainly written on the basis of the sources from the territory of present-day Estonia (i.e. the northern part of medieval Livonia). It has not yet been possible for me to conduct a similar study on Latvian material.

Patron saints of about fifty rural churches are first recorded in the sources from the late sixteenth and the early seventeenth century, when the new (Polish and Swedish) authorities carried out land revisions and church visitations to obtain an overview of the condition of the churches as well as the villages and peasants belonging to the parishes.¹¹⁹ After more than half a century of intermittent wars, the land was devastated and many churches and chapels were in ruins. It cannot be excluded that, in some places, the original patron saint had been forgotten. We therefore cannot be certain whether all the dedications referred to in these sixteenth- to seventeenth-century sources represent the medieval situation. There are also districts from where there are no surviving visitation protocols and where the patron saint of a church is first referred to as late as the nineteenth century.

In fact, there is evidence for changes of patron saints in post-medieval periods. For instance, it was quite usual that if a church had two or more patron saints in the Catholic period, only one of them (normally the first one) was retained in the following centuries. For example, the church in Katküll (mod. Simuna, Estonia) was in 1346 referred to as the church of the apostles SS Simon and Jude.¹²⁰ From at least the seventeenth century onwards, the church was known as that of St Simon only.¹²¹ The same probably happened to the church in Emmern (mod. Järva-Peetri, Estonia), which in 1627 is still documented as dedicated to SS Peter and Paul, but thereafter St Peter remained the only patron.¹²² St Paul was also the second patron saint of St Peter's Church in Karmel (mod. Kaarma, Estonia).¹²³

There are also examples of the outright substitution of the patron saints. For instance, the Neukirche, later known as St. Marien-Magdalenen (mod. Maarja-Magdaleena, Estonia), was in 1443 and 1627 referred to as dedicated to the Virgin Mary.¹²⁴ From the second half of the seventeenth century, the church and the parish bear the name of St Mary Magdalene.¹²⁵ The church in Kapstfer (mod. Torma, Estonia), which is first referred to in documents in 1319 (without the patron saint), was, according to the visitation protocol of 1601, dedicated to the Eleven

¹¹⁹ *Hefte zur Landeskunde Estlands*, ed. Oleg Roslavlev, 7 vols (München, 1965–73); *Polska XVI wieku*; Bunge, 'Protocoll der Catholischen Kirchenvisitation', pp. 23–77.

¹²⁰ *LUB* 1/2, no. 847 (2 May 1346).

¹²¹ *Est- und Livländische Brieflade: Eine Sammlung von Urkunden zur Adels- und Gütergeschichte Est- und Livlands, 2/1: Schwedische und polnische Zeit*, ed. Eduard Pabst and Robert von Toll (Reval, 1861), no. 377 (1625), no. 547 (1643).

¹²² E.H. Busch, *Materialien zur Geschichte und Statistik des Kirchen und Schulwesens der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Gemeinden in Russland* (Sankt-Peterburg, 1862), p. 627.

¹²³ MS København, Rigsarkivet, Fremmed proveniens, Lifland, Øsel stift, Registrant 1a, fol. 181v (1522). There is also pictorial evidence for this: SS Peter and Paul are depicted on a pillar of the church (stone reliefs from the fifteenth century). See Kersti Markus, Tiina-Mall Kreem and Anu Mänd, *Kaarma kirik* (Tallinn, 2003), pp. 76–77, figs 95, 97.

¹²⁴ *LUB* 1/9, no. 950; *Hefte zur Landeskunde Estlands* 1: 7.

¹²⁵ Recorded as such, for example, in 1680. Carl Eduard Napiersky, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Kirchen und Prediger in Livland*, 4 vols (Mitau, 1843–52), 4: 172.

Thousand Virgins.¹²⁶ In all likelihood, this was a Catholic tradition. However, only a few decades later, the church is referred to as the *Jungfernkirche* (Church of the Virgin).¹²⁷ The church was rebuilt in the eighteenth century and since then it has borne the name of the Virgin Mary. It remains open whether the development from the Eleven Thousand Virgins to the Mary the Virgin took place because the original dedication was indeed forgotten and Mary was considered to be the true patron, or because Mary fitted the Protestant context better and the patronage of the Eleven Thousand Virgins was deliberately abrogated. These examples suffice to demonstrate that we cannot draw any conclusions or make statistics of the patron saints based on the surviving evidence. The patron saints could have been changed not only in the post-medieval period, but also during the Middle Ages (as indicated already in the case of the Cistercian nunnery in Riga). Some general remarks can still be made, however. The number of different saints chosen for the parish churches was not large: there were only about twenty saints to whom more than one church was dedicated. The most preferred saints included the Virgin Mary, St John the Baptist, St Nicholas, St Michael, St Martin, St Peter (and St Paul), St James the Greater, St Catherine of Alexandria, St George, St Andrew and St Laurence. A single church was dedicated to St Elizabeth of Thuringia, St Maurice, St Dionysius and some others.

The Catholic period in Livonia lasted from the early thirteenth century to the 1520s, when the Reformation process began. Consequently, the time during which churches and chapels were erected was comparatively short, which also explains the small number of patron saints. The saints chosen were those whose cult was particularly popular in the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, or whose veneration played a particular role in ideology of the conquest. By contrast, if there were no churches dedicated to a given saint, this did not necessarily mean that his or her cult was unknown in Livonia. If we consider the information on the altars and chantries,¹²⁸ from the surviving calendars and works of art, we obtain quite different results than on the basis of church dedications.

Let me provide but one example, that of St Anne. There were no parish churches dedicated to her, and probably the only two chapels whose history reaches back to the medieval period were located in New Pernau and Ilsen/Funkenhof (mod. Bunkas, Latvia).¹²⁹ True, there existed two monastic houses dedicated to her (the Dominican friary in Narva and the Augustinian nunnery in Lemsal) but they

¹²⁶ *Hefte zur Landeskunde Estlands* 3: 159.

¹²⁷ *Hefte zur Landeskunde Estlands* 1: 174 (1624/27); 4: 166, 184 (1638).

¹²⁸ The problem with altars and chantries is the same as with most of the churches: normally we only know the main patron saint, and not the co-patrons, who are usually listed only in consecration charters. In this sense, the lists of altars compiled for the cathedral of Riga and for the major churches of Reval are incomplete: Bruiningk, 'Die Altäre'; Kala 'Tallinna raad ja katoliku kirik'.

¹²⁹ Laakmann, *Geschichte der Stadt Pernau*, pp. 51, 57; LUB 2/1, no. 76. The chapel in Ilsen was actually dedicated to SS Bartholomew and Anne.

were established very late, at the beginning of the sixteenth century.¹³⁰ There was also a plan to found a nunnery dedicated to St Anne in Reval (although it is unknown for which order), but it was never realized.¹³¹ However, if we consider the information on altars, it becomes clear that St Anne was immensely popular in medieval Livonia: in Riga, she had an altar and chantry in the cathedral, in St Peter's Church and in St James's Church;¹³² in Reval in St Nicholas's Church and the Church of the Holy Spirit, and two altars in St Olaf's Church.¹³³ In Riga and Reval, there was a confraternity of St Anne.¹³⁴ There was an altar of St Anne in the cathedrals of Dorpat and Hapsal, in St Nicholas's Church in New Pernau, in the Cistercian monastery in Falkenau (mod. Kärkna, Estonia),¹³⁵ as well as in several parish churches in the countryside.¹³⁶ Many depictions survive of St Anne in late medieval works of art: most frequently she is depicted together with the Virgin Mary and Christ Child (Figs 10.2 and 10.3).¹³⁷ According to the *Martyrologium* from 1509, the feast of St Anne (26 July) was celebrated in pre-Reformation Reval as *totum duplex*.¹³⁸

It merits attention that the cult of St Anne in Livonia begins very early. In medieval Europe, it intensified from the mid-fourteenth century, and culminated around 1500.¹³⁹ In Livonia, her feast began to be used in dating from about the

¹³⁰ Gertrud von Walther-Wittenheim, *Die Dominikaner in Livland im Mittelalter. Die Natio Livoniae* (Rome, 1938), pp. 15, 125, 139. For the nunnery in Lemsal see *Livländische Güterurkunden* 1, no. 652 (1504); *LUB* 2/1, no. 894 (c. 1500).

¹³¹ Kala, 'Tallinna raad ja katoliku kirik', p. 162; *LUB* 2/2, no. 75; MS Tallinn, Tallinna Linnaarhiiv, coll. 230, inv. 1-III, no. 75.

¹³² *LUB* 1/6, no. 2880; *LUB* 1/7, no. 372; Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, p. 359.

¹³³ Kala, 'Tallinna raad ja katoliku kirik', pp. 156–57, 159.

¹³⁴ Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, pp. 359–60; *LUB* 2/1, no. 845 (1499); *LUB* 2/2, no. 709 (c. 1505); Roland Seeberg-Elverfeldt, *Testamente Revaler Bürger und Einwohner aus den Jahren 1369 bis 1851. Revaler Regesten* 3 (Göttingen, 1975), nos 33, 54, 69, 87, 118, 126.

¹³⁵ *Livländische Güterurkunden* 1, no. 288 (Dorpat); MS København, Rigsarkivet, Fremmed proveniens, Lifland, Øsel stift, Registrant 1a, fol. 182r, 183r (Hapsal); *Pärnu linna ajaloo allikad*, p. 127, no. 22, p. 184, no. 76 (Pernau); *Livländische Güterurkunden* 1, no. 559 (Falkenau).

¹³⁶ *LUB* 2/3, no. 883 (Katköll); *Livländische Güterurkunden* 1, nos 322, 408, 421 (Lemsal), 2, nos 370 (Kreuzburg: mod. Dižkrizbergi, Latvia), 637 (Roop: mod. Lielstraupe, Latvia); Evald Blumfeldt, 'Saare-Lääne piiskopkonna visitatsiooniprotokolle', *Ajalooline Ajakiri* (1933), 44–55, 116–25 (here 118, Merjama); *Mitteilungen aus dem Gebiete der Geschichte Liv-, Est- und Kurlands* 3 (1845), 112 (Bauske: mod. Bauska, Latvia).

¹³⁷ See Kurisoo, 'Sancta Anna ora pro nobis', 24–33.

¹³⁸ Kala, 'The Church Calendar', p. 110.

¹³⁹ Religious developments that resulted in the intensive cult of St Anne have been thoroughly discussed in: Angelika Dörfler-Dierken, *Die Verehrung der heiligen Anna in*

mid-fourteenth century.¹⁴⁰ In 1360, Pope Innocent VI, granting indulgence to the supporters of the cathedral of Riga, lists several feast days on which the cathedral is to be visited, among them the feast of St Anne.¹⁴¹ Four years later, the chantry of St Anne in the cathedral is mentioned.¹⁴² In 1363, in a charter given to the hospital of St John the Baptist at Reval, indulgence was promised to those visiting the church on certain feast days, including that of St Anne.¹⁴³

The rapid development of the cult of St Anne in Livonia was probably due to many factors. On the one hand, her veneration is linked to the flourishing cult of the Virgin Mary and the growing interest in the origin of Mary and Jesus. On the other hand, the cult of female saints in the later Middle Ages grew generally. A novel phenomenon was the connection between saintliness and motherhood: it was acknowledged that a saint could be a mother, and St Anne became venerated as one of the most exemplary mothers and grandmothers in the history of Christianity.¹⁴⁴ The cult of St Anne probably reached Livonia via several channels: the Teutonic Order, the Hanse and the mendicants (she was popular among the Franciscans as well as the Dominicans). It should be added that the interest in Jesus' origin was not confined to the cult of his mother and grandmother. In the cathedral of Riga, there were two altars dedicated to St Joseph;¹⁴⁵ the altar of St Anne, the Virgin Mary and the Holy Kinship was founded in 1476 in St Nicholas's Church of Reval,¹⁴⁶ and there are three surviving late-medieval altarpieces and a pen-and-ink drawing with the depiction of the Holy Kinship (Fig. 10.4). In sum, the dedications of churches do not provide us with an adequate picture of the cults of the saints. In order to attain a better result, we have to combine data from as wide a variety of sources as possible.

Spätmittelalter und früher Neuzeit (Göttingen, 1992), pp. 45–74. For the development of the images of St Anne, see Nixon, *Mary's Mother*.

¹⁴⁰ *Das älteste Wittschopbuch der Stadt Reval (1312–1360)*, ed. Leonid Arbusow (Reval, 1888), no. 904 (26 July 1354).

¹⁴¹ *LUB* 1/6, no. 2868 (17 Aug 1360).

¹⁴² *LUB* 1/6, no. 2880 (25 Dec 1364), see also no. 2941 (6 May 1397).

¹⁴³ *LUB* 1/2, no. 997 (6 Sept 1363).

¹⁴⁴ Pamela Sheingorn, 'The Holy Kinship: the Ascendency of Matriliny in Sacred Genealogy of the 15th Century', *Thought* 64 (1989), 268–86 (here 272); Ton Brandenburg, 'St. Anne and Her Family: The Veneration of St. Anne in Connection with Concepts of Marriage and the Family in the Early Modern Period', in *Saints and She-Devils: Images of Women in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*, ed. Lène Dresen-Coenders (London, 1987), pp. 101–28 (here 123).

¹⁴⁵ *LUB* 1/10, no. 297 (2 Feb 1447); *LUB* 1/12, no. 255 (4 April 1464); Bruiningk, *Messe und kanonisches Stundengebet*, pp. 454–55.

¹⁴⁶ MS Tallinn, Tallinna Linnaarhiiv, coll. 230, inv. 1, no. Bk 2, fol. 37r: *in de ere sunte Annen vnd der leuen Junckvrouwen Maryen tho loue vnd to eren myt eren geslechte*.

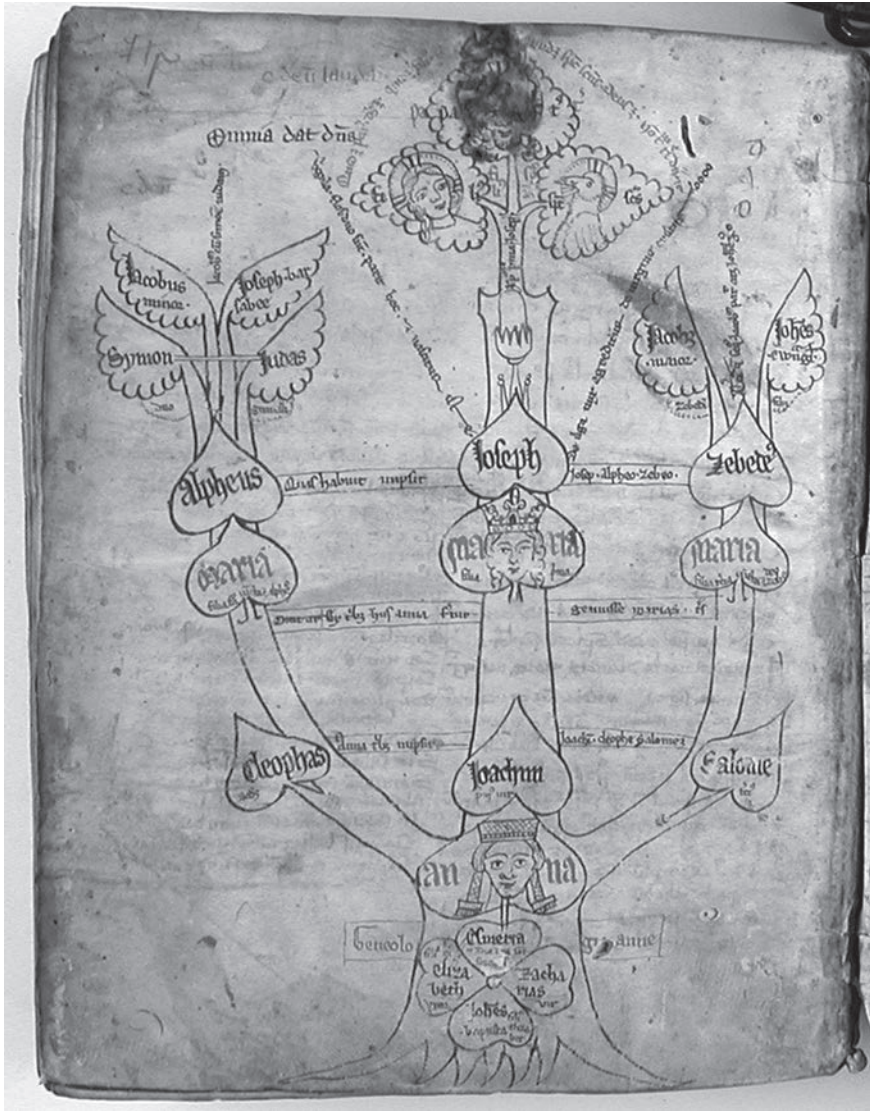


Fig. 10.4 The Holy Kinship. Pen-and-ink drawing in a thirteenth–fourteenth-century codex, presumably from the Dominican friary in Reval. MS Tallinna Linnaarhiiv, Cm 4, fol. 71v. © Tallinn City Archives.

Were the First Livonian Bishops Regarded as Saints?

In 1903, Hermann von Bruiningk published an article in which he addressed the question of whether the bishops Meinhard, Berthold and Albert von Buxhövdn had been venerated as saints.¹⁴⁷ They were certainly not canonized, nor do we find them in the calendar and other liturgical sources in Riga. However, there are some hints in chronicles, particularly that of Henry of Livonia, that point to the possibility that these first bishops, above all Meinhard and Berthold, were locally regarded as saints. When Henry describes the martyrdom of two newly converted Livs, Kyrian and Layan, he notes that they were buried in the church of Üxküll ‘beside the tombs of the bishops Meinhard and Berthold, of whom the first was a confessor and the second a martyr’.¹⁴⁸ Most noteworthy is also his record from 1225 on the visit of William of Modena to the church of Üxküll, where the papal legate ‘recalled the memory of the first holy bishops’ (*sanctorum episcoporum*).¹⁴⁹ Bruiningk asserts that Henry’s expression ‘holy’ must be taken literally, and that this could only mean that the two bishops were, at least at that time, recognized as saints and venerated as such.¹⁵⁰ He regards it as strange that Henry did not describe any miracles connected with the two, particularly since such miracles appear in other contemporary texts. In the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*, there is a story about the miraculous refilling of a chest with bread, after Meinhard had distributed everything to the poor; and Arnold of Lübeck in his chronicle reports on the miraculous preservation of Berthold’s body on the day after the battle (while other corpses were covered with flies and worms).¹⁵¹

In some post-medieval chronicles, Meinhard is also described as ‘holy’, notably by Johann Renner in his *Livländische Historien* (written in the second half of the sixteenth century) and by Moritz Brandis in his *Lieffländische Geschichte* (c. 1600).¹⁵² Another important factor to be taken into account is the fact that the remains of Meinhard and Berthold were at some point (it is uncertain exactly when) transferred from Üxküll to the cathedral of Riga. The location of Meinhard’s new

¹⁴⁷ Hermann von Bruiningk, ‘Die Frage der Verehrung der ersten livländischen Bischöfe als Heilige’, *Sitzungsberichte der Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Altertumskunde der Ostseeprovinzen Russlands aus dem Jahre 1902* (1903), 3–36. All three plus Bernard of Lippe, the abbot of the Cistercian monastery in Dünamünde (see Henry of Livonia, ch. XV.4, pp. 136, 138), are included in the list of the ‘Praetermissi’ of the *Acta Sanctorum*.

¹⁴⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. X.6, p. 50; *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, p. 57.

¹⁴⁹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIX.5, p. 322; *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia*, p. 234.

¹⁵⁰ Bruiningk, ‘Die Frage’, pp. 11, 13.

¹⁵¹ *Livländische Reimchronik*, ed. Leo Meyer (Paderborn, 1876), lines 458–80; *Arnoldi Chronica Slavorum*, p. 215.

¹⁵² Bruiningk, ‘Die Frage’, pp. 18–20. Renner reports the miraculous story with bread, and states that Meinhard ‘wert in Liflande vor hillich gehalten’: *Johann Renner’s Livländische Historien*, ed. Richard Hausmann and Konstantin Höhlbaum (Göttingen, 1876), p. 19.

burial place was particularly prestigious, in the chancel, north of the high altar, near the altar of the Holy Blood, while Berthold rested in front of the altar of the Holy Cross, that is, also very near to the chancel. The translation would have hardly taken place if the two bishops had not been regarded as holy.¹⁵³ Bruiningk concludes that in all likelihood, Meinhard and Berthold were initially regarded as 'blessed' or 'holy' by the Church of Riga and venerated as such, but at some point their cult was suppressed by the authorities. This must have happened before 1400, as there is no trace of their veneration in the early fifteenth-century missal of the cathedral. The passage in Johann Renner's chronicle indicates, however, that the 'holiness' of Meinhard was still remembered by the local population in the mid-sixteenth century.¹⁵⁴

One of the reasons for such suppression may have been the tightening control of the Roman Church in the late Middle Ages concerning the popular cult of saints and the proclamation of new saints. However, there is no evidence that the Rigan Church ever made an attempt to initiate the canonization process of these first Livonian bishops. Almost every country had its own 'national' saint(s) in the Middle Ages. In neighbouring Scandinavia, this was either the first 'apostle' in the region, like St Henry of Finland,¹⁵⁵ or someone from the royal dynasty, such as St Knud the King, St Knud Lavard, St Olaf or St Erik Jedvardsson. It is difficult to explain why local cults emerged in some lands and not in others. Pious life and miracles may not have been enough, since canonization was usually dependent on complex political, ideological and religious factors.

One should not forget that Livonia was a conglomeration of small feudal states, belonging to different lords – the archbishop of Riga, the bishops, the king of Denmark (until 1346) and the Teutonic Order – who often were in conflict with each other. In this context, one should ask if there ever was real 'demand' for a local saint. The obvious potential promoter of a cult of the first bishops would have been the Rigan Church, but, as we have seen, even if it did so in the thirteenth century, it ceased in the following centuries. It may be argued that times had changed: in the late Middle Ages, when the importance of the merchant class had grown considerably and when new functions were given to the 'old' saints such as the Virgin Mary, St Peter or St John the Baptist so that they could be prayed to in matters of sealing or trade, missionaries or martyrs like Meinhard or Berthold had nothing to 'offer' the Livonians.¹⁵⁶ However, in order to provide a more satisfactory explanation to this problem, a further analysis of political and ideological circumstances of Livonia is required.

¹⁵³ Bruiningk, 'Die Frage', pp. 6–9.

¹⁵⁴ Bruiningk, 'Die Frage', p. 20.

¹⁵⁵ Heikkilä, *Pyhän Henrikin legenda*, pp. 8, 16.

¹⁵⁶ Zender, 'Heiligenverehrung', p. 4.

Conservatism of the Rigan Church

Scholars have emphasized the conservatism of the Church of Riga, not only because the first bishops were not venerated as saints, but because only very few saints canonized in the late Middle Ages were included in the missal, the calendar and the breviary of Riga. Of those canonized in the thirteenth century there were only four: Dominic Guzman, Francis of Assisi, Elizabeth of Thuringia and Hedwig of Silesia. Of those canonized in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, only Birgitta of Sweden can be found there. And although the Cistercians were the first monastic order to arrive in Livonia at the beginning of the thirteenth century, and played an important role in the conversion of the country, Bernard of Clairvaux (canonized 1173) was only included in the missal and calendar of the cathedral of Riga as late as in the fifteenth century. In those sources from Riga, we also do not find such important saints as Anthony of Padua, Bernardino of Siena or Thomas Aquinas, although Franciscan and Dominican friaries had existed in Riga since the thirteenth century. Although there is evidence for the cult of some late-medieval saints who were not included in the calendar, such as St Ivo (d. 1303, canonized 1347), whose altar is known from the cathedral of Riga, one can characterize the Rigan Church as unusually closed to new saints and new feast days.¹⁵⁷

Naturally, the Rigan sources reflect only the situation in the diocese of Riga (although its influence on the rest of Livonia must not be underestimated). Due to the lack of calendars from other cities or dioceses, we cannot obtain a general overview of the acceptance or rejection of the cult of new saints in Livonia. That differences must have existed, for instance between Riga and Reval, is evident from the handwritten additions to the *Martyrologium* (printed in Venice in 1509), preserved from Reval: there, two feasts of St Thomas Aquinas (7 March and his translation on 29 January) have been marked with the highest degree: *totum duplex*.¹⁵⁸ The *Martyrologium* most probably belonged to the Dominican friary, and it is difficult to determine to what extent the feasts celebrated by the Dominicans influenced the general calendar of feasts in the city. In the future, it will be necessary to conduct a detailed analysis of the surviving sources from both cities, including not only the written documents but also works of art.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁷ Bruiningk, 'Die Frage', pp. 22–24.

¹⁵⁸ Kala, 'The Church Calendar', p. 110.

¹⁵⁹ For instance, four Franciscan saints, including Anthony of Padua and Bernardino of Siena, were originally depicted on the wings of the Passion altarpiece (c. 1510–15, in the Niguliste Museum, Tallinn), but were repainted in the 1520s and replaced with St James the Greater, the Virgin Mary, St Adrian and St Anthony the Great. See Helena Risthein, 'Über den Passionsaltar und die Franziskaner: Die ursprüngliche Gestalt der Flügelaussenseite', in *Eesti kunstisidemed Madalmaadega*, pp. 97–109. It is not known who ordered the overpaintings to be made or why and where they were made (in the Low Countries, that is, before the altarpiece arrived in Reval, or in Reval).

Conclusions

Due to the limitations of space, it has been possible to discuss only a few aspects of the cult of saints in Livonia. Several subjects, such as the cult of saints in the monastic orders as well as among the guilds and confraternities, a closer analysis of altars and iconographic sources, of relics and pilgrimage sites, and the possible interaction between the official forms of cult and popular practices, remain untouched in this chapter. As a result of political events, the geographical location and economic connections of Livonia, one can observe here influences from several countries and regions that played an important role in its history: (northern) Germany, Denmark and Sweden. The cult of saints was promoted via several channels and organizations, such as the Teutonic Order, the Hanse and the monastic orders (most notably the Cistercians, the Dominicans and the Franciscans). The Church of Riga can, on the one hand, be described as rather conservative, because the cult of the first bishops was not promoted and very few new saints were introduced into the calendar. On the other hand, the cults of certain saints such as the Virgin Mary and St Anne were particularly strong, and perhaps stronger than in other culturally related countries.

PART IV

Catholicism and Orthodoxy

Chapter 11

Sterile Monsters?

Russians and the Orthodox Church in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia

Torben K. Nielsen

Introduction

The southern shores of the Baltic Sea and the western part of the Baltic inland region became targets for Christian expansionism through Danish and especially German missionary and military activities from the middle of the twelfth century. By the late twelfth and increasingly in the early thirteenth century Christian expansionism progressed further east and north, targeting Livonia, an area largely covering present-day Latvia and Estonia. Just south of these areas, however, the strong inland state of Lithuania was a rare example of a pagan society which for a longer period was able to withstand attempts at Christianization, only submitting to Christianity in the final quarter of the fourteenth century.¹

From the first years of the thirteenth century, Christian activity in Livonia was a mission of the sword, which resulted in a situation of almost constant warfare. Countless human atrocities were committed in these areas, many in the name of the Christian God. Three Latin (i.e. Catholic) Christian powers played important roles in this militant process of conversion and Europeanization: the missionary bishops from the northern German Church in Bremen, the kingdom of Denmark, at the time the leading naval power in the Baltic Sea region, and finally, the Sword Brethren, a Christian militia established around 1202, but later absorbed into the Teutonic Order.² However, other powers were also active in these areas. The Russian princes of Pskov and Novgorod and the pagan tribes from neighbouring Lithuania took part in the pillaging, murdering and robbing in the area during these fights for conversion, dominion and sheer power.

The efforts of Meinhard, the first German missionary to Livonia, were in fact non-violent, although violence was common enough in local power struggles at the time. Around 1186 Meinhard was accepted by the Livish tribe living close to the

¹ For a relevant bibliography of works in English, see *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, ed. Alan V. Murray (Aldershot, 2001), pp. 277–85.

² For an excellent analysis of these complicated processes of Europeanization and colonization covering the Baltic Rim Region at large from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries, see Nils Blomkvist, *The Discovery of the Baltic: The Reception of a Catholic World System in the European North (AD 1075–1225)* (Leiden, 2005).

estuary of the Dūna (mod. Daugava/Zapadnaya Dvina), precisely because he knew of alternative protective measures for the local pagan community. The knowledge of stonemasonry for the purpose of building fortifications was introduced into this area by masons brought in from Gotland. Meinhard used this technology in his missionary work and had the Livs accept baptism on the promise that stone forts would be built to protect them from raids from their Lithuanian enemies.³

These initially non-violent *encounters* brought about by Meinhard's missionary efforts, however, soon turned into excessively violent *clashes* of culture. These clashes were witnessed by a German chronicler, Heinricus, or simply Henry of Livonia as he is named in English. It is the aim of this chapter to investigate certain aspects of the violent clashes of cultures between German crusader-missionaries and their counterparts, the Russian petty princes and the Orthodox Church. Two recent articles have dealt with these issues in rather different approaches and scope, as is revealed by their titles. The German historian Christoph Schmidt analyses the apparent increasing antipathy to the Russians on the part of Henry of Livonia. According to him, the chronicler's growing aversion closely followed the general results of the conversion processes in the eastern Baltic region: the further the German Church under the leadership of Bishop Albert of Riga pushed the borders of paganism to the north, the more confrontationally and dismissively Henry wrote of the Russians. The growing political opposition between the Church of Riga and the Russian princes thus had a decisive influence on Henry's chronicle.⁴ Partly in contrast to this view, the Estonian historian Anti Selart demonstrates how Henry's chronicle demonstrates that he was not a member of the decision-makers grouped around the bishop of Riga.⁵

³ For a discussion of the early missionary efforts by Meinhard, see Carsten Selch Jensen, 'The Nature of the Early Missionary Activities and Crusades in Livonia, 1185–1201', in *Medieval Spirituality in Scandinavia and Europe: A Collection of Essays in Honour of Tore Nyberg*, ed. Lars Bisgaard, Carsten Selch Jensen, Kurt Villads Jensen and John H. Lind (Odense, 2001), pp. 121–37, and Carsten Selch Jensen, 'The Early Stage of Christianisation in Livonia in Modern Historical Writings and Contemporary Chronicles', in *Medieval History Writing and Crusading Ideology*, ed. Tuomas Lehtonen and Kurt Villads Jensen (Helsinki, 2005), pp. 207–15 and the literature listed there.

⁴ Christoph Schmidt, 'Das Bild der "Rutheni" bei Heinrich von Lettland', *ZfO* 44 (1995), 509–20 (here 520): 'Insgesamt ergibt sich damit der Eindruck, daß der politische Gegensatz zwischen Livland und den nordwestlichen Fürstentümern der Kiever Rus' im Bild des Chronisten von den "Rutheni" alles andere überlagert hat.'

⁵ Anti Selart, 'Confessional Conflict and Political Co-Operation: Livonia and Russia in the Thirteenth Century', in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, pp. 177–96 (here 157–58): 'Yet if we compare this image [i.e. as given by Schmidt, TKN] with political practice, we cannot possibly maintain that hostility was the view that determined policies. Of course, we must remember that Henry was a parish priest, who was far from belonging to the circle of decision-makers in Livonian matters. It was just that Albert von Buxhövdén, as well as Winno (1204–9) and Volkwin (1209–36), masters of the Sword Brothers, together with the other leaders of the Rigan crusaders and merchants,

As much as I acknowledge the views of Anti Selart on the *Realpolitik* of the area, I shall in this chapter try to further develop the readings of Christoph Schmidt. Even if we consider Henry to be of very great, but critical, value in informing us about the mission and the crusading efforts in the Baltic region, we must still bear in mind that his was a thoroughly Christian chronicle. As such, it projects several images of the 'Other' as seen by a German Christian, whether 'the Other' was pagan and local, fellow Latin Christian of Danish or Swedish origin, or Russian. All of these images seem to serve the overall purpose of lending legitimacy to the efforts of the German Church and Henry himself in spreading the Word and submitting the Baltic peoples to Latin Christianity under German rule.⁶

Henry of Livonia and his Chronicle

Henry's *Chronicon Livoniae* covers a span of more than forty years, dealing with the conversion of the eastern Baltic peoples from around 1184 when the first German missionary bishop, Meinhard, came to Livonia until 1227, when the papal emissary William of Modena exercised his legatine authority over the Catholic powers in the region. Henry's work was to become one of the most important sources for our knowledge of the region in the early thirteenth century.⁷

Few manuscripts of the chronicle have been preserved to this day. Henry's original manuscript is lost and the surviving examples all seem to be copies of a now

had to reckon with the actual balance of power in upholding and expanding their rule. This was a country where relations with Catholic neighbours – primarily the Danes, who were competitors in the subjugation of Estonian territory – were not perfect either.' The present chapter was completed before the publication of Anti Selart, *Livland und die Rus' im 13. Jahrhundert* (Köln, 2007), and thus I have not been able to make use of Professor Selart's recent discoveries and interpretations.

⁶ This chapter will deal only with Russians. I hope to have the opportunity to delve more deeply into Henry's depiction of the Danes, which seems to be one of partly contempt and partly neglect. Henry's depiction of the pagans varies greatly according to time and place and tribal connections. These are important factors which an investigation of Henry's views on pagans would be wise to take into account. Overall it seems that the chronicler depicts the pagans in the usual stereotypes of either cruel savages or ill-bred children. However, he also clearly recognizes the importance and value of outstanding, former pagan, individuals for the missionary process. See on this point Torben K. Nielsen, 'Mission and Submission. Societal Changes in the Baltic in the Thirteenth Century', in *Medieval History Writing and Crusading Ideology*, pp. 216–13, and Nielsen, 'Mission, omvendelse og samfundsomvæltning i Baltikum i 1200-tallet', *Den jyske historiker* 89 (2000), 89–111.

⁷ Henry of Livonia, *Heinrici Chronicon Livoniae*, ed. and trans. Leonid Arbusow and Albert Bauer, *Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters: Freiherr vom Stein-Gedächtnisausgabe*, 24 (Darmstadt, 1959). Quotations in Latin in this chapter are taken from this edition; quotations in English are from *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia: Henricus Lettus*, trans. James A. Brundage (New York, 2003).

lost manuscript dating from late in the thirteenth century. Of the sixteen known manuscripts, only five can be termed independent in the sense that they are not copies of other known manuscripts, and thus contain an original version of the chronicle. These manuscripts can be divided into two groups, which form the basic textual foundations for modern editions. The oldest, the Codex Zamoscianus, now in Warsaw, dates from the early fourteenth century, but is severely marred by large lacunae due to destruction. Luckily, a manuscript dating from the seventeenth century and contained in the collections of the Rigan cleric Nathaniel Skodiesky, now in the City Library of Riga, can be used to fill the lacunae in the Codex Zamoscianus, thus establishing a solid version of Henry's chronicle.⁸

Only scant details of Henry of Livonia's personal biography are known to us, and mostly these stem from the chronicle itself. Scholars agree that Henry was a German cleric, probably from Magdeburg, and born around 1188.⁹ He was ordained as a priest in 1208, following his arrival in Livonia in 1205 in the company of the third German missionary bishop, Albert von Buxhövden. A staunch defender of the Christian faith, Albert was the successor to bishops Meinhard, who had died in 1196, and Berthold, who was killed by the pagans in 1199.¹⁰ In 1208 our chronicler was granted a parish in the region of Ugaunia, in which he settled.¹¹ Henry stayed in his parish for the remainder of his life, apart from the frequent wars in which he often took part, either directly as a combatant or as an interpreter, since apparently he spoke several of the Baltic languages.¹²

⁸ The main textual corpus in the 1959 edition by Arbusow and Bauer is provided by the Codex Zamoscianus, for which they do not give a shelfmark. The manuscript from the Nathaniel Skodiesky Collection in Riga is given as no. 2394 in the City Library. See the remarks on the manuscripts given in the edition at pp. xxx–xxxii, the introduction to Brundage's translation at pp. xxx–xxxi, 17–18, and also Leonid Arbusow, 'Die handschriftliche Überlieferung des *Chronicon Livoniae* Heinrichs von Lettland', *Latvijas Universitatis Raksti* 15–16 (1926–27), which was unavailable to me during the writing of this chapter.

⁹ See Paul Johansen, 'Die Chronik als Biographie: Heinrich von Lettlands Lebensgang und Weltanschauung', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* n.s. 1 (1953), 1–24; Manfred Hellmann, 'Heinrich von Lettland (Heinrich der Lettenpriester)', in *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, 9 vols (München, 1990), 4: 2096–97; Torben K. Nielsen, 'Henry of Livonia', in *Encyclopedia of the Crusades*, ed. Alan V. Murray, 4 vols (Santa Barbara, 2007), 2: 575–76.

¹⁰ For a biography of Albert of Riga, see Gisela Gnegel-Waitschies, *Bischof Albert von Riga: Ein Bremer Chorherr als Kirchenfürst im Osten (1199–1229)* (Hamburg, 1958). The history of Meinhard is covered by Henry of Livonia, ch. I.1–14, pp. 2–11. For the history of Berthold, see Henry of Livonia, ch. II.1–10, pp. 11–17, and for his death ch. II.6, pp. 14–15.

¹¹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XI.7, pp. 78–81. Henry was granted the parish of Papendorf (mod. Rubenes, Latvia), situated some 75 km north-east of Riga.

¹² For Henry as a combatant, see ch. XXIII.7, p. 240, and as an interpreter, ch. XVI.3, pp. 156–59.

The very structure of Henry's chronicle reflects the conversion process itself in its different stages. It is divided into four books, the first three of which deal with the episcopates of Meinhard, Berthold and Albert respectively, making the first two books quite short, and allowing the episcopate of Albert to stretch into the fourth book, which ends the chronicle. It was possibly Henry's intention to honour the first two missionary bishops by allocating them a book each. Yet even if Books III and IV focus very strongly on the important figure of Bishop Albert of Riga, they are also dedicated to different parts of the Baltic region. Book III covers the conquest of (southern) Livonia and Book IV deals with the conquest of Estonia. Chapters I and II constitute Books I and II respectively, while Book III extends from Chapter III to Chapter XII.5. Chapter XII.6 marks the beginning of Book IV with the words *Incipit liber quartus de Estonia*.¹³ The structure of Henry's chronicle may possibly tell us that, from the point of view of the Germans, it was considered 'natural' to first convert Livonia and afterwards to proceed north towards Estonia.¹⁴ By the time of his death around 1259,¹⁵ Henry could have looked back at a historically decisive period. During his years in the eastern Baltic region, he had witnessed how the Christian Latin forces slowly, but irresistibly pushed the borders of paganism further and further to the north.

The Latin Church and the Russians

One might expect that as a Catholic priest, Henry of Livonia would regard the Russian Christians with some mistrust. Relations between the Latin and the Greek Orthodox churches had deteriorated since the great schism in 1054. At the beginning of his pontificate, Innocent III (1198–1216) actually tried to revive a papal policy towards the Orthodox Church, although without much success. Much to blame for the lack of success was papal policy itself, which scarcely stretched beyond demanding from the Greek Church full recognition of the Roman

¹³ Henry of Livonia, ch. XII.6, p. 88.

¹⁴ Even if the conversion of the eastern Baltic peoples was carried out in a competitive atmosphere between German, Russian and Danish powers, Henry's account is almost totally quiet on the Danes and their ambitions and interests in Estonia, and downplays Danish maritime supremacy in the Baltic Sea as well as the Danish royal presence in the region, except for the unavoidable occasions in 1206 and 1219 when the king of Denmark led major expeditions to Livonia. This looks like a deliberate policy as a way of diminishing the Danish influence in the region, and Henry's motives are obvious, if we consider his chronicle to be at least partly a report to be delivered to the papal legate, William of Modena, in the 1220s. From the 1170s, however, the Danish Church had undertaken several actions to convert the Estonians. See Tore Nyberg, 'The Danish Church and Mission in Estonia', *NordEuropaforum* 1 (1998), 49–72.

¹⁵ Henry of Livonia, p. xvi.

primacy.¹⁶ Even though the Roman Church demanded recognition of its primacy and supremacy from 1054 onwards, and even if the Eastern Church never accepted these demands, it was only later in the thirteenth century that overt hostility and notions of the Russian Orthodox Church as schismatic or heretic were expressed in the Baltic region itself.¹⁷ Gradually the Roman Curia, too, developed a more and more confrontational policy towards the Orthodox Russians. During the pontificate of Gregory IX (1227–41), the papacy ‘advocated a policy of confrontation by the newly established Catholic powers in the Baltic region towards the Orthodox Russians in the neighbouring Russian principalities’.¹⁸ In 1232 the pope wrote to the newly ‘created’ bishop of Semgallia, Baldwin of Aulne, forbidding him to accept peace or armistice with pagans *and* Russians, and the ideological foundation for this policy was formally established when in November 1234 Gregory summoned the Sword Brethren, the archbishop of Riga, Nicolas of Nauen, and several high-ranking ecclesiastics in Livonia to answer a number of charges, among them the accusation that they had allied themselves with the heretical Russians: *Ruthenos hereticos*.¹⁹ Even earlier, in 1222, a potential conflict between Russians and Latin Christians in the eastern Baltic region had been brought to the pope’s attention. Bishop Albert of Riga issued a formal complaint to Honorius III that the Russians had corrupted the newly converted (i.e. those converted to the Catholic rite) with Orthodox rites and schismatic teaching. Albert’s letter evidently caused Honorius

¹⁶ The Fourth Crusade, involving attacks on the Christian city of Zara (mod. Zadar, Croatia) in 1202 and the sacking of Constantinople in 1204, obviously did nothing to further a reunion of the two churches. Among the vast literature on the crusade, see especially Donald E. Queller and Thomas J. Madden, *The Fourth Crusade: The Conquest of Constantinople. With an Essay on Primary Sources by Alfred J. Andrea*, 2nd edn (Philadelphia, 1997), and Helmut Roscher, *Papst Innocenz III. und die Kreuzzüge* (Göttingen, 1969).

¹⁷ See, for example, John Lind, ‘Scandinavian Nemtsy and Repaganized Russians. The Expansion of the Latin West During the Baltic Crusades and its Confessional Repercussions’, in *The Crusades and the Military Orders: Expanding the Frontiers of Medieval Latin Christianity*, ed. Zsolt Hunyadi and József Laszlovszky (Budapest, 2001), pp. 481–97. Lind argues that at least in the Baltic region ‘the two confessions [...] still felt themselves to be part of the one, common, universal Christian Church’ (p. 484). According to him it was only through the so-called ‘third Swedish crusade’ in 1293–94 that the Swedes came to view the Russians as schismatics or pagans. The Swedish *Erik Chronicle*, written presumably in the 1320s, ‘constantly stigmatizes the Russians as pagans while referring to the Swedes as Christians’ (p. 485).

¹⁸ John Lind, ‘Mobilization of the European Periphery against the Mongols. Innocent IV’s All-European Policy in its Baltic Context’, to appear in *Acta Visbyensia* XII.

¹⁹ Lind, ‘Mobilization of the European Periphery’. The papal letter of November 1234 is printed in *Diplomatarium Danicum*, 4 series in 41 vols (København, 1938–2002), 1/6, no. 199. It is Lind’s opinion that with this action the papacy was actually singling the Russians out as ‘potential targets of future crusades’.

III to command that the Orthodox Christians in Riga should be repressed, and state that the Latin Christians should actively hinder Orthodox practices.²⁰

In her recent book Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt argues that the papal policy towards the Russians in the first decades of the thirteenth century was not yet marked by such definite rejection and hostility. 1225 saw the meeting of the papal legate William of Modena with a Russian delegation in Riga, and in 1227 Honorius III issued a letter to 'all the kings of Russia' in which he expressed his joy that the kings had declared (possibly to William) their interest in receiving both a papal legate and instruction in the holy doctrines, and that they apparently were now willing to 'abnegate all their prior errors'.²¹ Fonnesberg-Schmidt's conclusion on this matter deserves to be quoted in full:

The curial policy on Russia in the first years of Gregory's pontificate [1227–41] thus included attempts at converting Russian princes through peaceful submission, support to a mission amongst Orthodox Christians and exhortations to fight those Russians who were perceived to be a threat to the Latin Christian missions. This diversity reflects not only that 'Russia' consisted of a series of principalities with different policies and different contacts with Latin Christendom, but also that the curial policy was still a reactive one in which Rome simply responded to reports and requests from those local agents who came into contact, peaceful or belligerent, with the Russians.²²

Local agents of Europeanization would eventually come into contact with Russians.²³ This was unavoidable since, as Henry makes clear, there was a Russian presence in several localities along the river Dūna.²⁴

²⁰ LUB 1/55: *Ne igitur nisi talium insolentia compescatur; schisma Graecorum suscitetur; antiquum nos illud videamur sub dissimulatione fovere, mandamus auctoritate apostolica compescatis, facientes pro neophytorum scandalo evitando, ut praedicti Rutheni Latinorum observantiis constringantur; ubi, ritibus innitendo Graecorum, separari a capite, hoc est a Romana ecclesia, dignoscuntur.*

²¹ LUB 1/95.

²² Iben Marie Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades 1147–1254* (Leiden, 2007), pp. 223–24.

²³ To use a prominent concept from Blomkvist, *The Discovery of the Baltic*.

²⁴ Henry of Livonia, ch. XI.9, p. 84, XIII.4, p. 100. However, Muntis Auns, 'Acquisition of the Acquired: The Establishing of a Real Administration in Livonia', in *Culture Clash or Compromise? The Europeanisation of the Baltic Sea Area 1100–1400 AD*, ed. Nils Blomkvist (Visby, 1998), pp. 259–67, claims on the basis of archaeological evidence that the 'Russians' from Jersike and Koknese mentioned in Henry's chronicle should be regarded as locals in terms of ethnicity, who simply subscribed to the Orthodox faith (p. 259). Auns further claims that the tribute levied by the Russian princes on tribes situated along the river Dūna was not permanent and in fact paid rather irregularly, and that there is no further evidence of Russian authority in centres along the Dūna (p. 258). It seems to me, however, that Auns in his argumentation uses Henry's chronicle somewhat eclectically.

Encountering Deceivers and Cowards: Vetseke of Kukenois and Visvaldis of Jersika

In the light of the volatile situation in the region and considering that the papal policy towards the Russian Church at the time could be termed at least ambiguous, one might still be justified in expecting Henry to express some mistrust towards the Russians and their Church. Although possibly conceived as a report to the papal emissary, his chronicle is not, however, a strictly political report. Henry does not reflect the intricate differences in policy employed by the Curia or the jumbled divergences of policy in the numerous and changing Russian principalities in the region, or the obvious needs of his own superior, Albert of Riga, to make alternating political alliances. Henry was a priest, first and foremost, and he wrote as such.

Henry often describes the different persons, whether princes, ordinary people or representatives of the Russian Church, by a simple group denomination as 'Russians' (Lat. *Rutheni*). This term does not serve the purpose of stating precisely who these people were or making clear their geographical or political affiliations. The term *Rutheni* appears more as something of an unconscious socio-religious term showing only that those denominated as such simply followed the rite of the Orthodox Church. Henry never makes use of the word 'schismatic' to further designate the Russians or followers of the Orthodox rite. Nonetheless, the depictions in his chronicle are still rather unfavourable to the Russians, since his accounts of their ways often seem to stress what he saw as their thorough deceitfulness.

We read in connection with the year 1208 that a band of German knights belonging to a vassal of Albert of Riga, Daniel of Lennewarden, assaulted a Russian prince, Vetseke, in his fort in a place known as Kokenhusen or Kukenois (mod. Koknese, Latvia), apparently to take vengeance for the many 'inconveniences' (Lat. *incommoda*) caused by Vetseke to Daniel and his men. Under cover of night the German troops approached the fort only to find the Russians sound asleep and the guard not being as watchful as he should be. Upon entering the fort, however, the Germans suddenly wavered. We are told that they dared not kill the Russians 'because they too were Christians'. Instead, they chained the Russians and collected all their wealth. Daniel, perhaps now worried by the attack and possibly questioning the wisdom of his men's actions, quickly sought advice from Bishop Albert of Riga. When told of the incident, Albert became very angry, ordered the immediate release of the Russians and made a quick peace with them. This came at some expense, for besides the reinstatement of Prince Vetseke in his fort and the return of all his goods, Albert had to offer him proper compensation in the shape of several horses, precious garments, a band of twenty men at arms and a

At one point he rejects Henry's information on the Russians, as stated above, and at another takes it at face value. For instance, Auns easily accepts Henry's stance when it comes to the negligence of the Russian princes towards their supposed subjects, p. 260.

company of masons to fortify the Russian castle.²⁵ Obviously, it must have been of considerable political and strategic importance for Albert of Riga to keep peace with this Russian petty prince. Vetseke was probably a vassal of Prince Vladimir of Polotsk (mod. Polatsk, Belarus), and he had made a peace treaty with Albert of Riga in 1205 which he even renewed in 1207.²⁶

The background to the renewal of the peace in 1207 could have been Russian attacks. Henry tells how Vladimir, king (or prince) of Polotsk, who claimed overlordship of the regions along the Dūna, and from whom Meinhard had asked permission for his mission, reacted to German emissaries from Bishop Albert. At the beginning of 1206 Albert sent gifts to Vladimir 'to acquire the friendship and intimacy' of the king. However, Albert's emissaries were robbed by Lithuanian 'bandits', and on finally reaching Polotsk learned that Livish elders were about to 'incline the heart of the king to expel the Germans from Livonia'. According to Henry, Prince Vladimir believed the Livish claims that their burdens ('the yoke of the faith') were intolerable and he was secretly planning an expedition to descend on Riga. When the prince's plans were revealed he instead 'concocted a trick, for he spoke sweet words in the manner of a dove and did harm like a snake in the grass'.²⁷ Of course this metaphor of the two-tongued snake serves to underline the deceitfulness of the Russian prince. Probably Vladimir wished to demonstrate his sovereignty and summoned both the Livish elders and Bishop Albert to arbitration. Albert flatly turned down this invitation, stating that it was 'the custom of all lands [...] that the messengers who are sent by their lords approach or seek out him to whom they are sent. No prince, however humble or friendly he may be, goes outside his walls to meet legates'.²⁸ During 1206, the Rigans attacked the forts of the Livs around Riga, and eventually the prince of Polotsk laid siege to Holme, a stronghold on the island of Martinsholm (mod. Mārtiņsala, Latvia). However, he turned back from attacking Riga.²⁹

²⁵ Henry of Livonia, ch. XI.8, p. 80. Auns, 'Acquisition of the Acquired' (p. 260) argues that Henry's Vetseke was not of Russian origin, but a local leader who adhered to Orthodox Christianity. This may well be the case. However, Bauer (Henry of Livonia, p. 42 n. 2), regards the name Vetseke as equivalent to the Russian *Vyachko* (short for Vyacheslav). What is important in this respect, however, is the fact that Henry clearly perceived Vetseke to be a Russian prince.

²⁶ For 1205, Henry of Livonia, ch. IX.10, p. 42. For 1207, ch. XI.2, p. 68.

²⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. X.3, p. 48: *dolem machinatur; quia in columbe specie blanda loquens verba sic ledit ut anguis in herba* (trans. Brundage, p. 55).

²⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. X.4, p. 48: '*Communem*', inquit, '*omnium terrarum consuetudinem esse constat nuncios a dominis suis destinatos eum adire vel requirere, ad quem mittuntur; et numquam principem, quantumcunque humilem vel affabilem in occursum nunciorum de suis munitionibus egredi*' (trans. Brundage, p. 56). In the analysis of Blomkvist, *The Discovery of the Baltic*, pp. 628–32, Albert showed himself as a proper *Landesherr* (territorial lord) on a par with the other powers along the Dūna by not appearing for the Russian prince. Vladimir reacted by laying siege to Holme.

²⁹ Henry of Livonia, ch. X.12, p. 58.

Vetseke may have been involved in this unsuccessful Russian raid, and it could have been as a result of the Russian retreat that he asked for peace from Riga again in 1207. This came at a fairly high price, however: Vetseke concluded peace with Riga and gained the city's help against the Lithuanians only by submitting half of his domains and his castle to Albert. Vetseke thus became a vassal of Albert of Riga, a status hinted at through the slightly ritualistic wording in the chronicle.³⁰

Of course, in itself the story of the German assault on Vetseke's Russian garrison in Kukenois by Daniel of Lennewarden and his men does not display any serious criticism of the Russians *per se* on Henry's part. However, there is more to the story than meets the eye. By reading on, we can find the real *nature* of the Russian prince revealed. Henry tells us knowingly, that after the assault by Daniel and following the compensational agreement by the bishop of Riga, Vetseke was still 'meditating trickery in his heart':³¹

This little king returned to Kokenhusen and, not doubting that the pilgrims had now left with the bishop and knowing very well that only a very few remained in Riga, he could no longer conceal in his heart his perfidious schemes. He took counsel with all his men and, at the awaited time and upon the opportune day, he set his schemes in motion. Almost all the Germans had gone out to their work and were quarrying rocks in the moat for the building of the fort. They had, in the meantime, laid their swords and arms outside the moat, for, looking upon the king as their lord or father, they did not fear him. Suddenly all the men and servants of the king ran up, picked up the swords and arms of the Germans, and killed many of them as they stood unarmed and naked at their work.³²

³⁰ Henry of Livonia, ch. XI.2, p. 68: *Audiens autem rex Vesceka de Kukenois episcopi et peregrinum adventum, surrexit cum viris suis et abiit in occursum eorum et veniens Rigam ab omnibus est honorifice susceptus. Peractis itaque in domo episcopi diebus pluribus cum magno caritatis affectu, tandem auxilium episcopi contra insultus petit Lethonum, offerens sibi terre et castri sui medietatem. Quo accepto episcopus multis muneribus regem honorans et in viris et in armis opem promittens cum gaudio remisit ad propria.*

³¹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XI.8, p. 80: *licet dolos meditaretur in corde, revertitur in Kukenoys* (trans. Brundage, p. 76).

³² Henry of Livonia, ch. XI.9, p. 82: *Regulus autem predictus reversus in Kukenoys et peregrinos cum episcopo iam abiisse non dubitans, qui et in Riga paucissimos remansisse peroptime novit, perfidie sue dolos iam diuicius in corde suo abscondere non potuit, sed inito consilio cum omnibus viris suis et exspectato tempore et die oportuno, cum Theutonici fere omnes ad opus suum exirent et ad edificationem castri lapides in fossato exciderent, depositis interim gladiis et armis suis desuper fossatum, preterea regem quasi dominum vel patrem suum non timentes. Et ecce subito accurrentes servi regis et omnes viri sui gladios et arma Theuthonicorum diripiunt et plures inermes ex ipsis et nudos stantes in operibus suis interficiunt* (trans. Brundage, p. 77).

It is perhaps noteworthy that Vetseke in this connection is suddenly named 'little king' (Lat. *regulus*). Ordinarily, Vetseke is designated as *rex* proper.³³ It is plausible that Henry uses this diminutive epithet in a slightly denigrating way in order to make obvious for his reader how unfaithfully Vetseke had acted towards his superior, breaking both Christian and feudal law, and not acting as a king should.

According to Henry, only three Germans managed to escape to Riga to tell of this 'perfidious' act. In Riga, however, the citizens would already have guessed that something had gone terribly wrong, since we are told by Henry that the Russians threw the bodies of the seventeen murdered Germans into the Dūna and let them float downriver, thereby announcing the killings to the citizens of Riga.³⁴

After the assault on the Germans in the moat, Vetseke called for reinforcements from the grand prince of Pskov, Vladimir Mstislavich, who mobilized a large force, intent on conquering the Germans. However, Bishop Albert, detained by contrary winds in the harbour of Dūnamunde (mod. Daugavgrīva, Latvia), managed to persuade three hundred German crusaders to extend their service for another year to defend the Rigan Church from Russian attack, promising them extended indulgence and eternal life.³⁵ When news that the German knights were unexpectedly staying on finally reached the Russians, they simply collected their belongings, set fire to their fort at Kukenois and fled, 'each one on his own way' because they 'feared for themselves and their fort, because they had acted amiss'.³⁶ Thus the theme of cowardice in the Russians is introduced.

The story of Vetseke thus ends with him departing for Russia, leaving his kingdom for good, 'since he had acted evilly'.³⁷ When Albert of Riga the following year (1209) decided to go to Kukenois to take vengeance for his losses, apparently not knowing of the flight of the Russians, he found the place deserted. This gives our chronicler an opportunity to pass the following judgement: 'Finding the mountain deserted and, because of the filthiness of the former inhabitants, full of snakes and worms, he ordered and asked that it be cleansed and renovated, and had it strongly fortified'.³⁸ Henry's account of the sleeping guard, the Russian

³³ See, for example, Henry of Livonia, ch. XI.2, p. 68.

³⁴ Henry of Livonia, ch. XI.9, p. 82.

³⁵ Henry of Livonia, ch. XI.9, p. 82. The knights were returning to Germany having fulfilled a one-year pilgrimage in the service of the bishop of Riga. Once a year Albert would travel to Germany to do a tour of preaching, hoping to gather new pilgrims to Livonia. The pilgrims would sign up for a service of one year and receive remission of their sins for their efforts.

³⁶ Henry of Livonia, ch. XI.9, p. 82: *timentes sibi et castro suo, eo quod male egerint* (trans. Brundage, p. 78).

³⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. XI.9, p. 84: *sicut male egerat* (trans. Brundage, p. 78).

³⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIII.1, p. 96: *Et inventientes montem ipsum desertum et pre immundicia quondam inhabitantium vermibus ac serpentibus repletum iussitque et rogavit eundem montem mundari ac renovari et firmis fecit* (trans. Brundage, p. 88). Following the cleansing (!) of Kukenois, Albert granted half the fort to one of his vassals, Rudolf of

attack on the unarmed Germans, and the fleeing Russians all serve the purpose of calling forth in his reader associations of the Russians as sloppy, treacherous and cowardly. Christoph Schmidt argues that Henry's mentions of the filthiness of the Russian inhabitants should be perceived as a moral judgement and probably not taken at face value, while the mentioning of snakes and worms serves as a metaphor for double-tongued deceit.³⁹

It is quite obvious, however, that Henry jumps to conclusions. It was not because the Russians recognized they had acted 'amiss' or because they acknowledged their own evil acts that they left the area. Henry would have had no chance of knowing the strategic decisions behind the military operations of either Vetseke or Grand Prince Vladimir Mstislavich of Pskov. In fact, one must assume quite the opposite. If we are to believe that Albert of Riga was unaware that the Russians had already left the fort, how can we then believe Henry's story of why and when they actually left? By contrast, if Henry is right in stating that the Russians burned down their own fort and left on hearing about the large contingent of German knights in Riga, how are we to believe that Albert did not possess the same information as Henry? Henry's ending of the story, with Albert of Riga approaching the Russian fort not knowing that the Russians are long gone, shows clearly how the chronicler conjectures and juggles with his information in order to state his underlying premise: Russians bad – Germans good.

While the German reactions to Vetseke could be legitimized by his treason, the ambush on the knights and masons and his breaches of the peace agreements, the German capture of the city of Gerzike (mod. Jersika, Latvia), further up the River Dūna, was the result of an unprovoked attack on an Orthodox Christian neighbour. This involved another petty prince, Visvaldis.⁴⁰ The story of Visvaldis gives Henry the opportunity to further develop his theme of deceit and cowardice.

In Henry's chronicle we first encounter Visvaldis on the occasion that he captured two Latin priests outside Riga in 1203.⁴¹ However, it was only shortly after the capture of Kukenois that his troubled encounters with the Latin Christians began. Henry relates how in the autumn of 1209 Albert, 'always solicitous to promote and defend the Livonian Church', discussed plans with his trusted men concerning how 'the new church could be freed from the plots of the Russians

Jerichow, and had the fort guarded 'that no subtlety of the Lithuanians or false trickery (Lat. *Ruthenorum ficta dolositas*) of the Russians could deceive them'.

³⁹ Schmidt, 'Das Bild der "Rutheni"', pp. 518–19. King Vladimir Mstislavich of Polotsk was likened to a snake, as mentioned above.

⁴⁰ Auns, 'Acquisition of the Acquired', pp. 259–60, also considers Visvaldis to be of Baltic origin. Henry does not directly designate him as a Russian, but several times describes Russians accompanying him. Even if Visvaldis was not of Russian origin, he definitely belonged to the Orthodox faith and the city of Gerzike contained several Orthodox churches; see, for example, Henry of Livonia, ch. XIII.4, p. 103.

⁴¹ Henry of Livonia, ch. VII, p. 28.

and Lithuanians'.⁴² It was decided to go against Gerzike, since Visvaldis 'had always been an enemy of the Christian name and especially of the Latins'.⁴³ Henry enlightens us on the personal history of Visvaldis in order to highlight his thorough 'otherness': Visvaldis had taken as his wife the daughter of a Lithuanian leader, and thus Visvaldis was regarded by the Lithuanians as 'almost one of them, since he was their son-in-law', and he apparently acted as a leader of Lithuanian armies and helped them in many ways when they crossed the Dūna or when they were foraging.⁴⁴ Thus the German attack on Gerzike is carefully depicted as a strategic and preventive measure designed to halt the power of the Lithuanians. In the same passage, Henry tells us how even the Russians 'fled through the forests and villages from the face of the Lithuanians, however few, as rabbits flee before hunters'.⁴⁵ Once again the chronicler carefully, yet casually, spreads the image of the Russians as scared cowards.

The German army took Gerzike by surprise and apparently without much fighting, since the Russians in the city, after having suffered a few losses at the city gates, simply fled – 'not being able to defend themselves' – according to Henry.⁴⁶ The victorious Germans killed only a few in 'respect of the Christian name'. This respect did not, however, put off the Germans from plundering the churches of the city for 'bells, icons, other ornaments, money and large amounts of property'.⁴⁷

⁴² Henry of Livonia, ch. XIII.4, p. 100: *Et cum iam dies autumnales appropinquant, episcopus semper ecclesiam Lyvonensem promovere ac defendere sollicitus habito consilio cum discretioribus suis, qualiter ecclesiam novellam a Lethonum et Ruthenorum insidiis liberaret, diligenter pertractavit* (trans. Brundage, p. 90).

⁴³ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIII.4, p. 100: *Et recordatus omnium malorum, que rex de Gercike cum Letonibus Rigense civitati et Lyvonibus et Leththis [intulerat], contra inimicos christiani nominis ire ad bellum deliberant* (trans. Brundage, p. 90). Even if this passage reads as if Visvaldis were a pagan, Henry provides ample evidence elsewhere that he was in fact a Christian, albeit of the Orthodox faith, for example at ch. XIII.4, p. 104, where the Russians are called Visvaldis's *conchristianorum*.

⁴⁴ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIII, p. 100: *Erat namque rex Vissewalde de Gercike christiani nominis et maxime Latinorum semper inimicus, qui filiam potentioris de Lethonia duxerat uxorem et quasi unus ex eis, utpote gener ipsorum et eis omni familiaritate coniunctus, dux exercitus eorum frequenter existerat et transitum Dune eis et victualia ministrabat, tam euntibus in Ruciam quam Lyvoniam et Estoniam* (trans. Brundage, p. 90).

⁴⁵ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIII.4, p. 102: *Et fugerunt Rutheni per silvas et villas a facie Lethonum licet paucorum, sicut fugiunt lepores ante faciem venatorum* (trans. Brundage, p. 91). Interestingly, Visvaldis's town of Jersika is characterized with the same words as is later Vetseke in person: Jersika was 'always a trap and a kind of great devil': ch. XIII.4, p. 102: *Et cum esse Gercikke semper in laquem et quasi in dyabolum magnum*, and Vetseke himself was named 'a snare and a great devil' (trans. Brundage, p. 221). See also ch. XXVIII.2, p. 302 (*qui erat in laquem et in dyabolum magnum*) and note 32 above.

⁴⁶ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIII.4, p. 102.

⁴⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIII.4, p. 102: *pre reverencis christiani nominis paucos occidentes [...]. Sed itaque die illo omnis exercitus in civitate, et collectis spoliis multis*

An important trophy of the victory was the queen, who was presented to the bishop with her servants and all her possessions. The following day the Germans set fire to the city, and Henry recalls the lamentations from Visvaldis, apparently watching from the other side of the Dvina and exclaiming the following, apparently loud enough for Henry to hear:

‘O Gerzika beloved city! O inheritance of my fathers! O unexpected downfall of my people! O woe is me! Why was I born to see the burning of my city and the sorrow of my people!’⁴⁸

Having returned to Riga with Visvaldis’s wife as hostage, Albert summoned Visvaldis, who appeared humbly begging for peace. Henry’s mentioning that ‘the bishop with all his men took pity on the suppliant king’ serves of course only to underline the gravity of the ensuing lapse from German loyalty by Visvaldis.⁴⁹ A peace agreement was made, which involved Visvaldis donating his kingdom to the Rigan Church and receiving it back from Albert as a fief before receiving back his wife and the other captives. The agreement was inaugurated by rituals involving the donation of three banners from Albert to Visvaldis, signalling his new status as a vassal of the bishop of Riga.⁵⁰

As expected, Visvaldis did not adhere to Albert for long. Henry relates how Visvaldis forgot his promise of fidelity and quickly became involved in the affairs of the Lithuanians and incited pagans against the Germans downriver at Kukenois.⁵¹ The overall deceitfulness in Visvaldis is advanced as the main reason why the German knights Meinhard, John and Jordan of Kukenois robbed the city twice in 1214. On the second occasion the three knights died in battle because Visvaldis and Gerzike were aided by the Lithuanians from the other side of the river.⁵²

de omnibus angulis civitatis tulerunt vestis et argentum et purpura et pecora multa et de ecclesiis campanas et yconias et cetera ornamenta et pecuniam et bona multa tollentes secum asportaverunt (trans. Brundage, p. 91).

⁴⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIII.4, pp. 102–4: ‘O Gercike civitas dilecta! O hereditas patrum meorum! O inopinatum excidium gentis mee! Ve michi! Ut quid natus sum videre incendium civitatis mee, videre contritionem populi mei!’ (trans. Brundage, p. 92). Henry puts words from 1. Macc. 15.33 and 2.7 into the mouth of Visvaldis.

⁴⁹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIII.4, p. 104: *Tunc episcopus cum omnibus suis regis supplicantis misertus* (trans. Brundage, p. 92).

⁵⁰ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIII.4, p. 104. Blomkvist and others read this incidence as a very conscious act by Albert, establishing himself firmly as an important political player in the area. This is further highlighted by a charter from Emperor Otto IV which relates the conditions for Visvaldis’s handover in greater detail than Henry does. See Blomkvist, *The Discovery of the Baltic*, p. 635 and LUB 1/15.

⁵¹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIII.4, p. 104.

⁵² Henry of Livonia, ch. XVIII.4, p. 172, XXVIII.9, p. 180.

Throughout Henry's chronicle, the Latin Christians make treaties for peace and commerce with the Russians on countless occasions, only to see them violently broken. Needless to say, in the chronicle this is never the fault of the Latins. In Henry's view the Russians, even though they ought to act as fellow Christians, are considered deceitful and cowardly. In giving this evaluation, Henry actually can be interpreted as criticizing his own bishop for entering into negotiations and agreements with the Russians. Henry's views seem to be, that with Russians one does not keep the peace: they are to be defeated and forced back.

Of Greed and Neglect: The Russian Conversion Practice

Deceit and cowardice are, however, not the only unflattering epithets that Henry bestows on the Russians. Greed and neglect also figure among the other negative connotations in Henry's chronicle, and these elements come to the fore in situations where the Russians are either in more or less direct contact with or display the same measures and tactics as the German missionaries and crusaders.

On many occasions we find the Russians laying siege to pagan strongholds. Often though, the Russians seem in Henry's mind to be only too happy to receive bribes from the besieged when these are offered. When relating an incident from 1210, Henry, using fairly no-nonsense language, presents what seems to be his basic assumption regarding the Russian conversion practice, highlighting the themes of greed and neglect:

At the same time, the great king of Novgorod, and likewise the king of Polozk, came with their Russians in a great army to Ungannia. They besieged the fort of Odempäh and fought there eight days. Since there was a lack of water and a shortage of food in the fort, the Ungannians sought peace from the Russians; and the Russians gave them peace. They baptized a few of them with their baptism, received four hundred *nogata* marks, left them, and went back to their country, saying that they would send back their priests to them to finish the holy regeneration of baptism. This they afterwards neglected, for the Ungannians later received priests of Riga, were baptized by them, and were numbered among the Rigan Christians.⁵³

⁵³ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIV.2, p. 108: *Eodem tempore rex magnus Nogardie, simul et rex de Plicecowe cum omnibus Ruthenis suis venerunt cum exercitu magno in Ugauniam et obsidentes castrum Odempe pugnauerunt cum eis diebus octo. Et cum esse in castro defectus aquarum et penuria ciborum, pecierunt pacem a Ruthenis. Et dederunt pacem eis et baptismate suo quosdam ex eis baptizaverunt et acceperunt ab eis in quadringentas marcas nogatarum et recesserunt ab eis et reversi sunt in terram suam, dicentes se sacerdotes suos eis missuros ad sacre regenerationis lavacrum consummandum; quod tamen postmodum neglexerunt. Nam Ugaunenses postea sacerdotes Rigensium susceperunt et baptizati sunt ab eis et connumerati sunt cum Rigensibus* (trans. Brundage, p. 95). The king of Novgorod

This story could be intended to cover the fact that the Rigan Church had simply taken over former Russian subjects, poorly legitimizing this action with the argument that the Russians had neglected their Christian duty of properly baptizing the conquered pagans.⁵⁴

From 1212 Henry recalls a meeting between Albert of Riga and Vladimir, the king of Polotsk. It was intended to renew the peace between the two in order for both powers to be able to resist the Lithuanians more effectively. Besides these objectives, it was meant to arrange a secure trading route for the merchants on the river Dūna.⁵⁵ In order to get to the meeting from Riga, the bishop and his company had to travel upstream along the Dūna, as did the merchants, who had armed themselves for protection against raids from Lithuanians on either side of the river. This was a meeting of some political importance, and the bishop of Riga was accompanied by representatives of the Sword Brethren, leaders (the so-called *elders*) of the formerly pagan tribes in the area and Vladimir Mstislavich, the recently expelled prince of Pskov.⁵⁶ Henry recalls the meeting:

They came to the king and began to examine with him the things that justice demanded. The king asked, now blandly, now with pointed threats, that the bishop cease baptizing the Livonians. The king maintained that the Livonians were his servants and that it was in his power to baptize them or to leave them unbaptized.

As an explanatory note to this statement from King Vladimir of Polotsk, Henry adds that ‘it is, indeed, the custom of the Russians kings not to subjugate whatever people they defeat to the Christian faith, but rather to force them to pay tribute and money to themselves’.⁵⁷ This attitude does not at all please the German chronicler,

was Mstislav Mstislavich Udaloy (d. 1228) and the king of Polotsk was named Vladimir: Selart, ‘Confessional Conflict’, p. 155.

⁵⁴ From 1211 comes another story of the Russians’ inclination to accept bribes to lift a siege on the pagans and not considering the baptism of the besieged. This time the ransom was 700 *nogata*: Henry of Livonia, ch. XV.8, p. 146. Selart, ‘Confessional Conflict’, pp. 155–56 relates that in this period there was a fairly peaceful atmosphere between Riga and Pskov/Novgorod, helped among other things by the marriage between Theoderic, a brother of Albert of Riga, and the daughter of the Pskovian king Vladimir Mstislavich.

⁵⁵ Henry of Livonia, ch. XVI.2, p. 151.

⁵⁶ When returning with his army from Estonia in February 1211, the king of Pskov, Vladimir Mstislavich, found his city ravaged and his people slain by Estonians. The people of Pskov reacted by expelling Vladimir and his family from Pskov, even if Henry (ch. XV.13, p. 148) claims that the expulsion had to do with the fact that Vladimir Mstislavich had married his daughter to Theoderic of Buxhövdén. Vladimir fled to the king of Polotsk, from whom he received only little support. Finally he went to Riga and joined his son-in-law and the bishop.

⁵⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. XVI.2, p. 150: *Et venientes ad regem ceperunt ea, que iusticia dictabat, cum eo retractare. Rex vero modo blanditiis, modo minarum asperitatibus*

who uses this opportunity to contrast the Russian inclination with the correct, German way to deal with these pertinent questions: Henry refers in his chronicle to a speech by Albert in which the Rigan bishop refers to the baptizing commands in the Gospel of Matthew (28.19), stating that he would in no way 'quit what he had begun, nor would he neglect the duty of preaching, which had been enjoined upon him by the supreme pontiff'. However, Albert admitted Vladimir of Polotsk's right to levy taxes on the Livs in question. This attitude of Albert is justified by referring to the Gospel of Matthew on rendering to Caesar what is Caesar's (Matt. 22.21). The meeting could easily have ended in confrontation, we are told. If we are to believe Henry, this was because the Livs refused to serve two masters (a reference to Matt. 6.24), and accordingly suggested to Albert that he 'should liberate them completely from the Russian yoke'.⁵⁸ The Russian king, however, refused to listen to these 'just and logical arguments' and instead threatened to burn down all the forts of Livonia and also Riga itself. His army approached Albert of Riga's camp, ready for war. The Germans, however, showed themselves willing to meet the Russian king in open battle, and the result was that King Vladimir ordered his army to retire. Vladimir then made peace with the bishop.⁵⁹ The dense use of biblical phrases could immediately suggest two things. Firstly, maybe a sign that Henry was not an eyewitness to these incidents. Secondly, the biblical phrases themselves serve the purpose of placing the Germans and their conversion strategies firmly within wider Christian history.

The stories in Henry's chronicle thus serve the purpose of contrasting the Russians and the Germans, showing the Germans as uncompromising and always incorruptible in their fight for the Christian name. Before the German siege of a fort in Sattesele in 1212, crammed with Livish apostates and rebels, Albert of Riga (or possibly Henry himself) stated the objectives of the endeavour as being to 'separate the tares from the wheat and to root out the evils which had arisen in the land before they multiplied'.⁶⁰ Towards the end of the siege, Albert generously

episcopum conveniens, ut a Lyvonum baptismate cessaret, rogavit, affirmans in sua esse potestate, servos suos Lyvones vel baptizare vel non baptizatos relinquere. Est enim consuetudo regum Ruthenorum, ut quamcunque gentem expugnaverint, non fidei christiane subicere, sed ad solvendum sibi tributum et pecuniam subiugare (trans. Brundage, p. 122).

⁵⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. XVI.2, p. 152: *Lyvones autem nolentes duobus dominis servire, tam Ruthenis videlicet quam Theutonicis, suggerebant episcopo in omni tempore, quatinus eos a iugo Ruthenorum omnino liberaret* (trans. Brundage, p. 122).

⁵⁹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XVI.2, p. 152: *Quorum audaciam veritus rex exercitum suum redire iussit et transiens ad episcopum et tamquam patrem spirituales salutans veneratus est; similiter et ipse tamquam filius ab eo receptus est. Et commanentes ad tempus verborum interloquutionibus omnia, que pacis erant, diligenter inquirebant [...]. Unde tandem rex Dei fortassis edoctus instinctu Lyvoniam totam domno episcopo liberam reliquit, ut pax inter eos perpetua firmaretur tam contra Letones quam contra alios paganos et via mercatoribus in Duna semper libera prestaretur.*

⁶⁰ Henry of Livonia, ch. XVI.4, p. 159: *zizaniam a tritico separare et mala in terra orta volens extirpare antequam multiplicentur* (trans. Brundage, p. 127).

offered the rebels the chance to return to the Church even if they had revolted and thrown off their baptism:

At length they gave up, raised Blessed Mary's standard on high, and bowed their necks to the bishop. They humbly besought him to spare them and promised that they would immediately accept the neglected faith of Christ, that they would henceforth observe the sacraments faithfully, and that they would never again call to mind pagan rites. The bishop had pity on them. He forbade the army to sneak into the fort or to kill the supplicants, or to deliver the souls of so many to hell fire. The army faithfully obeyed the bishop and in reverence to him stopped the battle and pardoned the unfaithful men, so that they could be made faithful.⁶¹

According to Henry, this was the right way of doing things, and to him it was obvious that the Russian princes did not subscribe to this method.

Acts of Cruelty towards Fellow Christians

Henry shows a marked dislike for the Russian way of struggling for domination without apparently caring for the souls of the pagans. This attitude may account for his acceptance of German cruelty towards fellow Christians of the Orthodox rite. With the growing aim of bringing the provinces of Estonia under German rule, confrontations between the Russian princes and the Germans seem to have become inevitable. The original caution of Daniel of Lennewarden's men in 1208, who did not dare to kill the Russians on account of their Christian belief, was no longer adhered to. Henry relates that in 1216 the Russians of Pskov were enraged with the Estonians from Ugaunia for accepting Latin baptism and refusing Orthodoxy. The Ugaunians sought advice and help from the Latin Christians in Riga and tensions arose around the strong castle at Odenpäh (mod. Otepää, Estonia), where the Germans had settled while the Russians were ravaging the land around.⁶² Having captured and imprisoned some of the Russians, the Master

⁶¹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XVI.4, p. 160: *Unde tandem tradentes se vexillum beate Marie sursum erigunt, episcopo colla sua subiciunt, ut parcatur eis suppliciter exorant, ut fidem Christi neglectam cicius recipient, ut sacramentalia cuncta deinceps firmiter observant, ut ritus paganorum numquam amplius ad memoriam revocent. Misertus autem eorum episcopus exercitum prohibet, ne castrum subintrent, ne supplicantes interficiant, ne multorum animas gehenne tradant. Et obediens fideliter exercitus et reverenciam exhibens episcopo cessavit a bellis et pepercit infidelibus, ut fideles efficerentur* (trans. Brundage, p. 128).

⁶² The alliance between Riga and Novgorod-Pskov, consolidated by the marriage between Theoderic and the daughter of Vladimir Mstislavich, functioned in a campaign against Sontagana, Estonia in 1210–11 and against Vaiga and Järva, Estonia in 1212.

of the Sword Brethren in Wenden (mod. Cēsis, Latvia) actually released them and sent them back with honour to Russia with emissaries from Mstislav Mstislavich of Novgorod.⁶³ However, we learn from Henry that the Ugaunians ‘wished to avenge themselves on the Russians’:

They rose up with the bishop’s men and the Brothers of the Militia and went into Russia toward Novgorod. They found that the land had not been secured by any forewarnings. On the feast of Epiphany, when the Russians are accustomed to occupy themselves more with feasting and drinking, they divided their army among all the roads and villages. They killed many people, took captive a great many women, and drove off many horses and flocks. They took much loot and, having avenged their injuries with fire and the sword, they returned rejoicing to Odenpäh with all the loot.⁶⁴

Apparently not caring too much about the Christmas feast, the Germans continued plundering the region throughout January of 1217. In February, a large Russian force under the command of Vladimir Mstislavich of Pskov laid siege to Odenpäh, which ended with a compromise, since there were shortages both in the Russian camp and in the fort: ‘the horses ate each other’s tails’, and the Germans were allowed to leave for Riga.⁶⁵ Henry does not allow himself any comments on the apparent Russian forbearance and moderation in this situation of the German surrender of the fort. On the contrary, he tells the story of Theoderic, who was apparently tricked by false promises and was taken away to Novgorod. It is hard to believe Henry here. Rather, Theoderic could have been taken hostage as a part of the peace terms governing the German surrender, an assumption strengthened

See Henry of Livonia, ch. XIV.10, p. 120, XV.8, p. 146. However, political relations between Novgorod and Pskov soon deteriorated. Vladimir Mstislavich, originally expelled from Pskov, was named administrator of Idumea when Theoderic returned to Germany. When confronted by accusations of malpractice and greed, Vladimir Mstislavich chose to return to Russia 1214 with his family (Henry of Livonia, ch. XVIII.1–2, p. 171) only later in 1216 to claim the region of Ugaunia for himself: Selart, ‘Confessional Conflict’, p. 156; Henry of Livonia, ch. XX.3, p. 202.

⁶³ Henry of Livonia, ch. XX.5, p. 204.

⁶⁴ Henry of Livonia, ch. XX.5, pp. 204–6: *Ugaunenses vero, volentes se de Ruthenis vindicare, surrexerunt cum viris episcopi simul et cum fratribus milicie et abierunt in Rusciam versus Nogardiam, et invenientes terram nullis rumoribus premunitam, in festo epyphanie, cum conviviis et potationibus suis magis solent occupari, diviserunt exercitum suum per omnes villas et vias interfecerunt populum multum et mulieres quam plurimas captivas duxerunt et equos et pecora multa depellentes spolia multa tulerunt et igne et gladio suas iniurias vindicantes cum omni oreda reversi sunt in Odempe gaudentes* (trans. Brundage, pp. 157–58).

⁶⁵ Henry of Livonia, ch. XX.7, p. 208: *et comedebant equi caudas suas in invicem* (trans. Brundage, p. 159). Henry gives valuable information here as to the military tactics used in siege warfare.

by the fact that Albert rather quickly sent his emissaries 'to Novgorod and to Saccala to confirm the peace made at Odenpäh and also to ask them for his brother Theoderic'.⁶⁶

In the period from 1217 to 1223, when a rebellion started on the island of Ösel (mod. Saaremaa, Estonia) and spread among the Estonian mainland tribes, the breakdown of the alliance between Novgorod and Pskov on the one hand and Riga on the other manifested itself in several acts of enmity between the two former allies.⁶⁷ The Estonian uprising of 1223 was overcome by the Christians after heavy fighting, in which the storming of the castle of Fellin (mod. Viljandi, Estonia) played a prominent part. Once again Russian troops were involved.

In recalling the battle of Fellin in 1223, Henry seems careful to get the dates right. The Christian forces arrived in late July and began building siege machines. The siege lasted from the Feast of Peter's Chains (1 August) until the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin (15 August). There was a terrible heat and, inside the castle, people and beasts were 'perishing from hunger and thirst' while 'there was a great pestilence because of the excessive stench of those who had died in the fort'.⁶⁸ Finally, the Estonians in the castle surrendered, made peace with the Germans and promised to give satisfaction for their misbehaviour. The Germans spared them, even if – as we are told by Henry – from a legal point of view probably 'they had lost their lives and all their goods'.⁶⁹ The reference to the Germans sparing the apostates' lives makes his following remark stand out the more: 'After taking the fort, they hanged all of the Russians who were in the fort and who had come to aid the apostates. This was done to the terror of the other Russians.'⁷⁰

The attempt to terrorize the other Russians did not help much, however. Russian forces soon gathered again, and in 1223 an old acquaintance, Vetseke, was restored

⁶⁶ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXI.1, p. 210: *Misit enim venerabilis prefatus antistes nuncios suos tam in Nogardiam quam in Saccalam pro pace in Odenpe facta confirmanda, supplicans eciam eis pro fratre suo Theoderico*. Henry here gives a short depiction of the Russians: *Qui cum sint homines elationis tumore repleti, simul et in superbia sua nimium arrogantes nec preces episcopi nec pacem Theutonicorum curantes*. Theoderic is reported back in Riga in 1220 at the latest: Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIII.9, p. 246.

⁶⁷ See, for example, Henry of Livonia, ch. XXII, pp. 218–30 from 1218, which is a long story of continued fights with Russians in alliance with different pagan tribes. However, in these paragraphs Henry refrains from scolding or ridiculing the Russians. In fact, this part of his chronicle is characterized by a rather prosaic style of writing.

⁶⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXVII.2, p. 294: *Cum enim esset calor nimius et multitudo hominem et pecorum fuisset in castro et iam fame et siti deficerent, facta est pestilencia magna pre fetore nimio interfectorum in castro* (trans. Brundage, p. 215).

⁶⁹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXVII.2, p. 294: *licet tam vitam quam bona cuncta perdiderint* (trans. Brundage, p. 215).

⁷⁰ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXVII.2, p. 296: *Ruthenos vero, qui fuerant in castro, qui venerunt in auxilium apostatis, post expugnationem castris suspendit exercitus omnes ante castrum, ad terrorem aliorum Ruthenorum* (trans. Brundage, p. 215).

to power, this time as commander of the city of Dorpat (mod. Tartu, Estonia), from where 'he did all the evil that he could do to the Christians'.⁷¹ In this capacity, Vetseke was still a power to be reckoned with. Albert accordingly sent messengers asking him to forsake the apostate rebels, fratricides and traitors who were staying in Dorpat, a demand that Vetseke flatly refused. Henry designates Vetseke as 'the old root of all evils in Livonia', and 'a snare and a great devil for the Saccalians and the other nearby Esthonians'.⁷²

Dorpat now was the last Russian stronghold in Estonia, and the Germans considered more than once the chances of a successful attack on the city.⁷³ Finally, in 1224 the assault on Dorpat commenced. It is rendered very vividly by Henry, who details the military tactics, the equipment and the diverse musical instruments used by the combatants.⁷⁴ In the final moves of the battle, the Russians are again singled out as specific targets:

The Russians, indeed, defended themselves for a very long time. At last they were beaten and fled up into the fortification. They were dragged out of there and all of them were killed: about two hundred, together with their king.⁷⁵

⁷¹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXVII.5, p. 298: *et fecit contra christianos omnia mala, qui potuit* (trans. Brundage, p. 215).

⁷² Henry of Livonia, ch. XVIII.3, p. 304: *Quorum princeps ac dominus idem rex erat, quia ipse radix antiquae malorum omnium in Lyvoniam fuerat* (trans. Brundage, p. 221); ch. XXVIII.2, p. 302: *qui erat in laqueum et in diabolium magnum*. Henry uses biblical references from 1 Macc. 1.37–38 and 1 Tim. 6.10 when designating the Russian prince.

⁷³ See, for example, Christmas 1223: Henry of Livonia, ch. XXVII.6, pp. 298–300. In this instance, the Germans chose to wait and instead directed their troops to other, lesser forts in the area. Their warlike measures and tactics were supposedly greatly admired by Russian messengers, who stayed in Riga; apparently communications had not broken down entirely. According to Henry, the messengers greatly marvelled 'for the Rigans never returned empty, without victory, just as the arrow of Jonathan never turned back nor did his shield fall in battle, and the sword of Saul returned not empty [2 Kings 1.2], while the great and strong armies of the Russian kings were never strong enough to subjugate to the Christian faith a single fort through their attacks' (trans. Brundage, pp. 219–20). The Latin text runs: *Nuntii interim regum Ruthenorum errant in Riga, rerum eventum expectantes et ammirantes quam plurimum, eo quod Rigenses sine Victoria numquam reverse sunt inanes, eo quod sagitta Ionathae numquam abiit retrorsum nec declinavit clypeus eius in bello et gladius Saul non est reversus inanis, cum exercitus magni et fortes regum Ruthenorum numquam unum castrum valeant expugnationibus suis fidei christianae subiugare*. Henry differs here from his normal view that the Russian manner of non-subjugation and non-conversion of overpowered pagan enemies was due only to Russian interest in tribute and taxes, but of course only because he is here allowed a further disparaging comment on the Russians.

⁷⁴ See Henry of Livonia, ch. XXVIII.5, pp. 306–8.

⁷⁵ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXVIII.6, p. 310: *Rutheni vero diutissime se defendentes tandem victi sunt et desuper intra munitionem fugerunt et inde iterum extracti, occisi sunt*

Apparently, the storming of Dorpat was close to a massacre. Henry mentions that the Germans killed the Estonians in their flight, including some of the women, who normally were not killed but taken away as prisoners of war and hostages. According to Henry, only one man, a vassal of the Russian king of Suzdal', survived. He was dressed up and equipped with a good horse and told to return to Novgorod and Suzdal' to tell the news of Dorpat.

Whisper Words of Wisdom: Henry of Livonia and the Mother of God

On two occasions, Henry comments on the Russians (and other opponents) in a manner which actually breaks with his otherwise chronologically organized account. In these passages, he takes pains to set out the claim to supremacy of the German (Livonian) Church in the Baltic region and her specific characteristics. Most importantly, he tells of the special relationship between the Livonian Church and the Mother of God, dedicating a whole chapter to a rather special eulogy of the Virgin Mary in which he demonstrates how Her protection and interventions were decisive in securing Livonia for German Christianity. It was through the Virgin Mother and Her obedient servants, such as Henry and his fellow warrior missionaries, that the pagans were 'aroused from the sleep of idolatry and sin', as the first sentence in his chronicle states.⁷⁶ Images of the Holy Mother, of

omnes una cum rege circiter ducenti (trans. Brundage, p. 226). The Germans followed the instigation of one 'noble and wealthy magistrate of the pilgrims', who before the assault had urged using terror on the Russians. Henry gives him a short speech before the attack: "We ought to storm this fort violently by going over the walls and to take revenge upon the evildoers to the terror of the others. For in all the forts hitherto taken by the Livonians, the enemy have always kept their lives and freedom, and the rest, therefore, have not been made afraid thereby. Now, therefore, we should glorify with great honors whoever of our men will first enter the fort by scaling the wall and we should give him the horses and the best captive there is in the fort, except for the king, whom we shall raise above all the others by hanging him from the highest limb". This advice pleased everyone' (trans. Brundage, pp. 224–25). The Latin text from ch. XXVIII.5, p. 308, runs: '*Oportet*', inquit, '*castrum istud violenter ascendendo comprehendere et vindictam de malefactoribus ad terrorem aliorum vindicare. In omnibus enim castris a Lyvonensibus hactenus expugnatis vitam et libertatem semper optinuerunt, et ideo ceteri nullos timores inde conceperunt. Nunc ergo, quicumque de nostris castrum scandendo primus intraverit, magnis eum honoribus exaltabimus et equos et captivum meliorem, qui fuerit in castro, illi dabimus, preter regem, quem in supremo ramo suspensum super omnes elavabimus*'. *Placet omnibus consilium.*

⁷⁶ The German church in Riga was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary and the German crusaders fought under her banner. In 1215, Albert of Riga participated in the Fourth Lateran Council. Henry tells of a conversation between Innocent III and Albert in the council, in which Albert spoke of Livonia as the 'Land of the Mother', comparing Livonia to Jerusalem, the Land of the Son. Since the crusades to the Holy Land were in the absolute forefront of the council, this seems like a very appropriate and clever speech by

mothering, giving birth, nursing and upbringing are prominent in both of these unusual passages.

The first of the two passages follows Henry's account of the opposition to an emissary who had been sent by Valdemar II of Denmark in 1221 to take over the magistracy of Riga.⁷⁷ As a sign of the special relationship between Livonia and the Mother of God, Henry claims, the messenger from the Danish king returned discomfited and with the winds rising against him while at sea.⁷⁸ The special relationship between the Mother of God and Livonia occurs in a passage in which the chronicler comments on all the opponents the Livonian Church has confronted, including the Russians:

Did She not rule when She afflicted the many kings who were fighting against Livonia? Did She not afflict them when She struck with sudden death the great King Vladimir of Pskov as he was coming into Livonia with his army? Did She not immediately deprive of his kingdom the great king of Novgorod who devastated Livonia for the first time, and did She not cause him to be driven out shamefully by his citizens? Did She not kill through the Tatars the other king of Novgorod who devastated Livonia for the second time? Did She not sufficiently humiliate King Vsevolod of Gerzika, who despoiled the Rigans with fire and the sword? Did She not later destroy with a cruel death at Dorpat (as will be related below) King Vetseke, who once killed the bishops men at Kokenhusen? [...] Behold how the Mother of God, so gentle to Her people who serve Her faithfully in Livonia, always defended them from all their enemies and how harsh She is with those who invade Her land or who try to hinder the faith and honor of her

Albert, who, of course, was also rewarded by Innocent: 'We shall always be careful to help with the paternal solicitude of our zeal the Land of the Mother even as the Land of the Son' (trans. Brundage, p.152).

⁷⁷ Following a blockade of the harbour of Lübeck by Valdemar II, Albert had been forced to submit to the Danish king and accept Danish overlordship of the conquered regions in Livonia and Estonia: Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIV.4, p. 260, XXV.1, p. 268. When learning of the angry opposition to Danish overlordship from 'the prelates of the convents, the men of the church, the citizens, the merchants, the Livonians and Letts', apparently the Danish archbishop, Anders Sunesen, 'who had been tested in no small way by the persecutions of the pagans' decided to act as a negotiator between Albert of Riga and the Danish king, 'promising that he would restore Livonia's liberty once more, if only the Germans and Danes would rejoice at being one in peace and one at war against the pagans and the Russians'. Henry of Livonia, ch. XXV.1, p. 268.

⁷⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXV.2, p. 268: *et ibat sine rectore navis et proiectus est a vento contrario. Et quia fortassis contra voluntatem ipsius, qui [ventis imperat], venerat in Lyvoniam, ideo non immerito venti contra eum insurrexerunt et sol iusticie non illuxit ei, pro quod Mariam matrem eius offenderat, que maris dicitur stella, quapropter et ipsa certam ipsi viam non onstendit.* On the special relationship with the Virgin Mother, Henry continues: *Sic, sic maris stella suam semper custodit Lyvoniam; sic, sic mundi domina terrarumque omnium imperatrix specialem suam terram semper defendit* (ch. XXV.2, p. 268).

Son in that Land! See how many kings, and how mighty, She has afflicted! [...] Consider and see, you princes of the Russians, or the pagans, or the Danes, or you elders of whatever people. Fear this gentle Mother of Mercy. Adore this Mother of God and give satisfaction to Her, Who takes such cruel revenge upon Her enemies. Do not wish henceforth to attack Her land, so that to you She may be a mother, Who has hitherto been an enemies to Her enemies, She who has always afflicted those who afflict Her people in Livonia.⁷⁹

In this passage the Russians are regarded just like the pagans, the Danes and other opponents. In Henry's mind the Livonian Church enjoyed a special protection from the Mother of God, which worked to the detriment of all Her enemies.

A Barren Behemoth: The Orthodox Church in Henry's Chronicle

In connection with the storming of Dorpat, Henry again discusses the new churches in Estonia and Livonia and their place in time and history. In this passage, the image of the Mother is used in another way. Here Henry is not directly concerned with the Mother of God, although it is likely that he would have appreciated such an association. Rather, he develops his text around a more general idea of motherhood and mothering, in which the Livonian Church appears as a mother. He talks about the year 1224 using a somewhat crude allegory:

⁷⁹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXV.2, pp. 270–72: *Nonne imperat, quando reges multos contra Lyvoniam pugnantes exacerbat? Nonne exacerbat, quando regem magnum Woldemarum de Plosceke venientem in Lyvoniam cum exercitu subitanea morte percussit? Numquid, non regem magnum Nogardie, qui Lyvoniam prima vice despoliavit, regno suo statim privavit, ut a civibus suis turpiter expelleretur? Et alium regem Nogardie, qui secunda vice Lyvoniam depredavit, per Tataros occidit? Numquid non regem Wissewaldum de Gercike, qui Rigenses spoliavit, igne et gladio satis humiliavit? Numquid non rex Vesceka, qui viros episcopi in Kukenois quondam mortificaverat, crudeli morte postmodum, sicut infra dicitur, in Tharbete interiit? [...] Ecce Die mater, quam mitis circa suos, qui fideliter ei deserviunt in Lyvoniam, qualiter ipsa semper defendit eos a cunctis inimicis suis, quamque crudelis circa illos, qui terram ipsius invadere sive qui fidem et honorem filii sui in terra ipsa conantur impedire! Ecce quot et quantos reges ipsa exacerbat! [...] Animadvertite et videte, principes Ruthenorum sive paganorum sive Danorum sive quarumcunque gentium seniores, ipsam tam mitem matrem misericordie time, ipsam Die matrem adorate, ipsam tam crudelem vindicatricem de inimicis suis placatam vobis reddite, terram ipsius deinceps impugnare nolite, ut ipsa sit vobis mater, que fuit hactenus semper inimica suis inimicis et affligentes suos in Lyvoniam magis ipsa semper afflixit (trans. Brundage, pp. 198–200). Henry here quotes from the Roman Breviary and the Hymn *Ave Maria stella*. For the textual inspirations in Henry, see Leonid Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut in Heinrichs *Chronicon Livoniae*. Ein Beitrag zur Sprache mittelalterlicher Chronistik', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 8 (1950), 100–53.*

The church of the Estonians was thus exposed at that time to the many misfortunes of war and was like the woman in labour, who has great sorrow and anguish until she gives birth. In pursuit of her offspring there comes a dragon, namely that Behemoth who drinks up a river and still trusts that the Jordan will flow into his mouth. The church could in no way be freed from the misfortunes of the wars (for she was still weak and an infant), save by the Livonian church, which had always been her true and original mother by the labour of conquest and had also given birth to her by the washing of regeneration in the faith of Jesus Christ. Many mothers, indeed, claimed this daughter falsely and always drew her to them by their lies. One of these was the Russian mother, always sterile and barren, for she always attempted to subject lands to herself, not with the hope of regeneration in the faith of Jesus Christ, but with the hope of loot and tribute.⁸⁰

Henry's use of the biblical figure of Behemoth as the monster which swallows the River Jordan, symbolizing the Christians, is rather unusual and raises an important question regarding the sources used in writing the chronicle.⁸¹ The metaphor of the swallowing of the Jordan was used by Pope Innocent III in a letter of 21 April 1198 and in a letter of 25 February 1204, both concerning heretics.⁸² The metaphor is used again in a papal letter of 12 October 1204 to Archbishop Hartwig of Bremen and his suffragan bishops concerning the Livonian mission,⁸³ and once again in a letter of 31 October 1209 to the Danish King Valdemar II concerning the king's campaign in the Baltic region.⁸⁴ The figure of Behemoth was also used in a number of Innocent III's sermons.⁸⁵

⁸⁰ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXVIII.4, pp. 304–6: *Erat itaque tunc Estiensis ecclesia multis bellorum incommodis exposita. Que fuit tamquam mulier pariens, que tristitiam et dolorem magnum habet, donec pariat; cuius eam partum draco persequitur, Behemoth videlicet ille, qui fluvium absorbens fiduciam adhuc habet, quod Iordanis influat in os eius. De tantis igitur bellorum angustiis nullo modo poterat ecclesia predicta liberari, que parvula fuit adhuc et infirma, nisi per Lyvonensem ecclesiam, que vera et prima semper mater ipsius fuerat per labores expugnationis, et que genuerat eam per lavacrum regenerationis in fide Iesu Christi, licet plures sibi matres falso filiam hanc usurpantes, mentientes semper, attraxerint, quarum una mater Ruthenica sterilis semper et infecunda, que non spe regenerationis in die Iesu Christi, sed spe tributorum et spoliis terrarum sibi subiugare conatur* (trans. Brundage, p. 222).

⁸¹ On this question in general, see Arbusow, 'Das entlehnte Sprachgut'.

⁸² See *Die Register Innocenz' III: 1. Pontifikatsjahr 1198/1199*, ed. O. Hageneder et al. (Graz, 1964), no. 94 (21 April 1198), and *Die Register Innocenz' III: 7. Pontifikatsjahr 1204/05*, ed. O. Hageneder et al. (Wien, 1997), no. 12 from 25 February 1204 to Kalojan of Bulgaria.

⁸³ *Die Register Innocenz' III: 7*, no. 139. This letter is also published in *LUB* 1/14.

⁸⁴ *Diplomatarium Danicum*, ed. Niels Skyum-Nielsen [see the comment made in note 19] (København, 1958), 1/4, no. 162.

⁸⁵ 'Sermo XIII: Dominica prima in Quadragesima' (PL 217: 374); 'Sermo XV: Dominica tertia in Quadragesima' (PL 217: 383), 'Sermo XXIII: In solemnitate sanctae

The passage from Henry's chronicle includes a rough mixture of biblical metaphors from the Gospel of John, the Book of Revelation and the Book of Job.⁸⁶ The overall picture conveyed, however, is rather clear even if there is some confusion as to who is acting as a mother. In the first line of the quote, the *Estonian* Church is likened to a woman in labour; she is exposed and weak and is violently pursued by the apocalyptic dragon. However, Henry goes on to develop the image of childbirth with the *Livonian* Church as the mother giving birth to Estonia, which is now likened to an infant daughter.

In Henry's view, the Orthodox Church and the Russian princes are not sufficiently interested in converting the peoples of the region, but prefer to oppress and plunder. Towards the end of the passage, Henry likens the labours of childbirth to the labours of conquest and conversion. The result of such labours is obvious: newborn Christians. This is exactly why the Orthodox Church must be termed as infertile in Henry's chronicle. The 'Russian mother' does not engage in the labour of conversion, and thus she cannot have the labour of birth, let alone offspring; hence the description of the Orthodox Church as sterile. The image also works the other way round: the Orthodox Church is barren and sterile, and thus she does not bother with the labour of conversion, let alone bring newborn converts to Christian life.⁸⁷ The situation is one of competition between different 'mothers', i.e. the Livonian and Russian churches. The image of the mother is, however, a difficult one to use: one might wonder, for instance, how it is that the Russian Church can be perceived as a mother, albeit a false one, when at the same time she is sterile and barren.

Greedy and deceiving princes belonging to a negligent church, and a false mother too? Not much good is said of Russian princes or the Orthodox Church in Henry of Livonia's chronicle. He would go far to present his readers with an unfavourable picture of the opponents to the Latin Church in Livonia under its master, Albert von Buxhövdén, bishop of Riga. Henry's chronicle is above all a tale of a violent clash of cultures in the eastern Baltic region in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. This clash of cultures was the result of a competitive struggle to convert the region's peoples to Christianity, but also to secure tithes and taxes. In this respect, the Russian princes acted to maintain their traditional income and secure their sphere of interest against German encroachment, and in doing so, earned their negative reputation in Henry's chronicle.

Pentecostes' (PL 217: 415); 'Sermo XXIV: In festo B. Petri ad vincula' (PL 217: 562); 'Sermo IV: In consecratione pontificis' (PL 217: 669).

⁸⁶ John 16.21; Apoc. 12.13; Job 40.10 and 18.

⁸⁷ Even if Henry uses the verb *pario* for the woman in labour, and the noun *labor* for the efforts of conversion, I find the suggestive translation in Brundage justified.

Chapter 12

Archbishop Vasilii Kalika of Novgorod, the Fortress of Orekhov and the Defence of Orthodoxy

Michael C. Paul

Introduction

Novgorod the Great was arguably the greatest city of medieval Rus', the eastern Slavic polity that arose in the ninth century and out of which Russia, Ukraine and Belarus were later formed. With the decline of Kiev following the Mongol sack of that city on 8 December 1240, Novgorod was the largest and wealthiest city in eastern Europe and the centre of Russian culture and art; it remained so until eclipsed by Moscow in the fifteenth century.¹ Novgorod made its wealth from the fur trade, capturing squirrels and more luxurious furs (ermine, sables, marmots and foxes) in the Novgorodian Land that stretched north and east of the city to the White Sea and beyond to the Ural Mountains, and trading bundles of these furs with German merchants in Novgorod itself. These merchants shipped them north up the River Volkhov, along the southern shore of Lake Ladoga, down the Neva into the Gulf of Finland and into the Baltic Sea and the Hanseatic cities of the northern Holy Roman Empire.²

¹ Mikhail Tikhomirov wrote that 'in the history of Rus' culture, Novgorod holds a place equal to that of Kiev': Tikhomirov, *Древнерусские города*, 2nd edn (Moskva, 1956), p. 383. Nikolai Dejevsky wrote that the city was 'the most consistent and prolific center of culture in medieval Russia': Dejevsky, 'The Churches of Novgorod: The Overall Pattern', in *Medieval Russian Culture*, ed. Henrik Birnbaum and Michael S. Flier (Berkeley, 1984), pp. 206–23, here 206. Viktor Bernadskii wrote that Novgorod's contribution to Russian art was on a par with Florence's contribution to Italian art. See Viktor Nikolaevich Bernadskii, *Новгород и Новгородская Земля в XV веке* (Moskva, 1961), p. 26. On Novgorod's historical, economic, and cultural importance, see Nikolai Ivanovich Kostomarov, *О значении Великого Новгорода в русской истории* (Sankt-Peterburg, 1903) and Tikhomirov, 'Velikii Novgorod in the History of World Culture', in *Новгород: 1100 летю города: Сборник статей*, ed. Mikhail Nikolaevich Tikhomirov (Moskva, 1964), pp. 23–38.

² On the fur trade and its significance to Novgorod, see Janet Martin, *Treasure of the Land of Darkness: the Fur Trade and its Significance for Medieval Russia* (Cambridge, 1985), esp. pp. 61–85, 130–40, 152–63; Janet Martin, 'The Land of Darkness and the Golden Horde: The Fur Trade Under the Mongols XIII–XIV centuries', *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique* 19 (1978), 401–21.

This trade was vital to Novgorod the Great, which used the wealth that it brought the city to build hundreds of churches, paint hundreds of icons and frescoes, write chronicles central to our understanding of medieval Russian history, copy, write and collect hundreds of books and illuminated manuscripts, and pay for other activities that made Novgorod the cultural centre of Russia for three and a half centuries. The wealth that flowed into the city was also vital to the grand princes of Vladimir who gathered tribute (Russ. *dan'*) in Novgorod for the khans of the Golden Horde in Sarai, near the mouth of the Volga. If trade were to be cut off by crusaders from Sweden or Livonia then Novgorod would decline in significance; if the silver stopped coming and the tribute could not be paid to the khans, then devastating punitive expeditions could be expected from the Mongols. Thus the trade and the routes along which it flowed needed to be protected.

The leg of the trade route from the mouth of the Volkhov out to the Baltic Sea was quite vulnerable. Catholic crusaders from Swedish-held Finland and Livonia threatened the area for several centuries.³ If they moved in and took the region, they could cut off Novgorod's lifeline, and if they succeeded in converting the local tribes along the shores of Lake Ladoga or the River Neva to the Catholic form of Christianity, these tribes could then act as a fifth column against the Novgorodians; their tribute would also go to the Swedes and Germans rather than to the Novgorodians. Thus, the princes and the Novgorodians defended this crucial region with a chain of fortresses stretching from the border with Livonia to the Volkhov and north into Karelia.

At the western end of this chain, Izborsk guarded the western approaches to Pskov, the second most important city in the Novgorodian Land, which stood on the border with Estonia (as it does today).⁴ The remnants of the fortress of Kopor'e stand 13 km south of the Gulf of Finland, 76 km west-south-west of present-day St Petersburg and 190 km north-north-east of Novgorod; in its heyday, Kopor'e defended the coast against landings by the Swedes, and offered some protection to merchants sailing up the Gulf to the Neva.⁵ At the eastern end of the chain, the

³ The Livonian order of Sword Brethren was founded by Albert von Buxhövden, bishop of Riga (1199–1229) in 1202 and merged with the Teutonic Knights in 1236.

⁴ Pskov gained independence from Novgorod in 1348. Staryi (Old) Izborsk is mentioned as one of the towns that the Varangians (Vikings), under Rurik, first took control of in 862. It was assigned to Rurik's brother Truvor: *Новгородская первая летопись: Старшего и младшего изводов*, ed. Arsenii Nikolaevich Nasonov (Moskva, 1950), p. 106. It was captured by the Sword Brethren in 1233: *Новгородская первая летопись*, p. 282. The ruins of the fortress (with a tower dating back to the 1330s), can be seen 48 km west-south-west of Pskov and 10 km from Novyi (New) Izborsk as the crow flies.

⁵ A wooden fortress was first built at Kopor'e by the Teutonic Knights in 1240, but Prince Aleksandr Nevskii (grand prince of Vladimir, 1246–63) took the fortress the following year: *Новгородская первая летопись*, pp. 78, 295. Aleksandr Nevskii's son, Dmitrii (grand prince of Vladimir 1276–81 and 1283–93), built a stone fortress there in 1280 (with Posadnik Mikhail and the greater men of the city), but the Novgorodians destroyed it two years later during a dispute with Dmitrii: *Новгородская первая летопись*, pp. 323–24.

fortress at Staraya Ladoga stands 15 km south of the mouth of the Volkhov, and defends the river route south to Novgorod.⁶ To the north-west, on the Karelian Isthmus, Keksholm (called Korela in the medieval Russian sources, and also known as Karela, Käkisalmi, and now as Priozërsk) stands 5 km inland from the western shore of Lake Ladoga, 83 km east-north-east of the fortress of Viborg (mod. Vyborg, Russia); from that vantage point, it controlled Swedish access to the lake and down the isthmus.

The middle link in the chain, where Lake Ladoga empties into the Neva, was the fortress of Orekhov (also called 'Oreshek'), which stands on the island of the same name in the middle of the river guarding access up and down the river and into and out of the lake.⁷ From this position, Orekhov was vital to the defence of Novgorodian and broader Russian interests in the region. If an enemy held the fortress it could cut off trade down the Neva and harass merchants and towns along the lakeshore. Thus, to defend this vital position, Prince Yurii Danilovich of Moscow (prince of Moscow 1303–25, prince of Novgorod and grand prince of Vladimir 1318–22) built a wooden fortress on Orekhov in 1323 and concluded a treaty with the Swedes there on 12 August of that same year.⁸ That, however, was

Portions of the present ruins date to 1297, when the fortress was enlarged and strengthened by the Novgorodians, but most of what remains is from the Muscovite or Imperial periods. On the rebuilding in 1297, see Новгородская первая летопись, p. 328.

⁶ The Volkhov River flows northward out of Lake Il'men (just south of Novgorod) and empties into Lake Ladoga. Novaya (New) Ladoga was built at the mouth of the Volkhov River by order of Peter the Great in 1704, after which Staraya (Old) Ladoga declined in importance. According to the *Novgorodian Second Chronicle*, the stone fortress at Staraya Ladoga was built by Posadnik Pavel in 1116; it has been rebuilt several times over the centuries. The Church of St George, housing fragments of Byzantine frescoes that date to 1167, still stands inside the fortress, probably the oldest extant building in the fortress. The fortress walls stand, partially in ruins, on the left bank of the river, with portions from the fifteenth century and several gun emplacements that date to the nineteenth or twentieth centuries. Thus, the fortress at Staraya Ladoga's defensive role spanned nearly eight centuries. On the building of the fortress, see 'Новгородская вторая летопись', in Полное собрание русских летописей, 43 vols (Sankt-Peterburg, 1841–), 3: 123.

⁷ Orekhov is probably short for *Ostrov Orekhov*, literally 'Island of Nuts.' *Oreshek* is the Russian diminutive for *orekh*, 'nut'. The fortress is also known as Orekhovets. For more on Orekhov, see Aleksandr Sergeevich Tomilin, Шлиссельбург: Историческое обозрение шведских воин, которых участвовала Шлиссельбургскую Крепость с подробным опиcанием осады её при Петром Великим и современным положение города Шлиссельбурга (Sankt-Peterburg, 1847); Tomilin, Великоновгородская святительская кафедра в историческом значении (Sankt-Peterburg, 1851), p. 35. The fortress is 160 km north of Novgorod and 35 km due east of St Petersburg.

⁸ Новгородская первая летопись, pp. 97, 339; 'Новгородская четвёртая летопись', in Полное собрание русских летописей (Moskva, 2000), 4/1: 260. Грамоты Великого Новгорода и Пскова, ed. Sigizmund Natanovich Valk (Moskva, 1949), nos 28, 38, pp. 55–56, 67–68. The treaty is also known as the Treaty of Nöteborg, the Swedish name for the fortress (meaning literally 'Nut Fortress', a translation of the Russian name). See

by no means the end of conflict with the Swedes. The fortress was fought over repeatedly for the next six centuries. The Swedes took the fortress in the late 1340s and the Novgorodians wrested it from them a year later, an episode which forms the focus of the current study. During Russia's Time of Troubles (1598–1613), the Swedes captured Orekhov on 12 May 1612 following a nine-month siege. They held it until Peter the Great (1682–1725) retook the fortress by amphibious assault on 11 October 1702.⁹ It was last fought over between 1941 and 1943 when the Wehrmacht tried to close the ring around Leningrad.¹⁰ Orekhov was thus an important and much-fought-over fortress, built by a grand prince, besieged by a crusading Swedish king, captured by a Swedish army only to be recaptured by a Russian tsar almost a century later, and last besieged in the greatest war in history.

Even after Yuri Danilovich built the fortress, the *Novgorodian First Chronicle* indicates that in the medieval period, it was usually princes who were most associated with Orekhov. Ten years after its founding, the Lithuanian prince Narimont sent his son, Aleksandr, to Novgorod, and the Novgorodians gave Aleksandr several fortresses and towns, including Orekhov, 'for his patrimony and heritage and his children'.¹¹ Fifty years after that, another son of Narimont, Patrikii, also arrived in Novgorod and was given the same towns and fortresses, including

also Jukka Korpela, 'The Russian Threat against Finland in the Western Sources before the Peace of Nöteborg (1323)', *Scandinavian Journal of History* 22 (1997), 161–72; Korpela, 'Finland's Eastern Border after the Treaty of Nöteborg: An Ecclesiastical, Political or Cultural Border?', *Journal of Baltic Studies* 33 (2002), 384–97; John H. Lind, 'Consequences of the Baltic Crusades in Target Areas: The Case of Karelia', in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, ed. Alan V. Murray (Aldershot, 2001), pp. 144–45; Janet Martin, *Medieval Russia 980–1584* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 183–85.

⁹ The gravestone marking the mass grave of the soldiers of the Preobrazhensky and Semenovskiy Guard regiments who died storming the fortress is still visible in the south-eastern part of the fortress although the cross on it was removed, presumably by the Soviets. On 27 May 1703 Peter the Great founded the Peter and Paul fortress and the city of St Petersburg at the east end of the river. Thus, in a little over seven months, Russia came to control the entire Neva River basin.

¹⁰ See also Lind, 'Consequences of the Baltic Crusades in Target Areas', p. 144. The city of Schlissel'burg ('Key City') stands on both banks of the river. It was so named by Peter the Great for its important position at the head of the Neva River (a large key now ornaments the top of the Sovereign's Tower, the main gate into the fortress). The city and fortress were known as Petrokrepost (Peter's Fortress) from 1944 to 1992, and the train station on the north bank still bears that name. The fortress served as a political prison during the Imperial period for such notables as Nikolai Novikov, Tsar Ivan VI, the Decembrists, Mikhail Bakunin, Lenin's brother (Aleksandr Ulyanov) and members of the People's Will; it now stands partially in ruins from the damage it suffered in the Second World War and there is a large memorial to the defenders in what remains of St John's Church. The fortress is now the site of an annual rock concert held in August.

¹¹ Новгородская первая летопись, pp. 345–46.

Orekhov.¹² More important than mere estates for the prince's maintenance, these were the same fortified towns (Ladoga, Orekhov, Keksholm and half of Kopor'e) that formed the aforementioned defensive belt along the Novgorodian frontier with Swedish Finland and commanded Novgorod's vital trade route to the west.¹³

With the Blessing of the Archbishop

But while Orekhov was a princely foundation and usually granted to princes to defend, the *Novgorodian First Chronicle* relates that in the first half of 1352, 'the boyars and the common people of Novgorod petitioned the archbishop of Novgorod, *Vladyka* Vasilii, to go establish a fort on Orekhov'.¹⁴ The chronicler then goes on to say rather plainly that 'he went and established the fort (*kostry*) and returned to Novgorod'.¹⁵ A slightly different version of this episode appears in the *Novgorodian Third Chronicle*, which tells that Archbishop Vasilii Kalika (1330–52) blessed the endeavour, but gives no indication that the Novgorodians requested that he personally oversee the reconstruction project or that he himself journeyed to Orekhov.¹⁶ Rather, it relates that 'in the year 6860 [1352 AD], with the blessings of Archbishop Vasilii of Novgorod the Great and Pskov, the Novgorodians built a stone fortress (Russ. *grad*) on Orekhov at the mouths of the Neva river'.¹⁷ The discrepancy between

¹² Новгородская первая летопись, p. 379; Новгородская четвёртая летопись, p. 339. Narimont, Aleksandr and Patrikii were 'service princes' and did not hold the title of prince of Novgorod.

¹³ Izborsk is the only one of the fortresses not included, probably because it was a Pskovian fortress and Pskov had gained independence from Novgorod in the 1340s.

¹⁴ *Vladyka* is the title of address for a bishop or archbishop in the Russian Orthodox Church and is equivalent to the term *despota* ('master') in the Greek Church.

¹⁵ Новгородская первая летопись, p. 100. The Younger Redaction does not mention the rebuilding of Orekhov. The Russians, until the reign of Peter the Great, measured their years from the beginning of the world, which they thought had occurred in 5508 BC. Thus by subtracting 5508 from the years given in the Russian sources, we arrive at the year of the Christian or Common Era.

¹⁶ Vasilii was elected archbishop in Novgorod in 1330 but was not consecrated until 25 August 1331: Новгородская первая летопись, pp. 99, 342–43; Michael C. Paul, 'Episcopal Election in Novgorod, Russia 1156–1478', *Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture* 72 (2003), 251–75 (here 269–70).

¹⁷ 'Новгородская третья летопись', in Полное собрание русских летописей, 3: 227; *Finlands Medeltidsurkunder*, ed. Reinhold Hausen, 6 vols (Helsinki, 1910), 1: 260, no. 626. The *Novgorodian Fourth Chronicle* does not mention the archbishop's participation in rebuilding the fortress, merely stating that 'The Novgorodians built the fortress (*gorod*) at Orekhov in stone': Новгородская четвёртая летопись, p. 282. The *Nikol'skii spisok* is even more direct, saying that 'the fortress of Orekhov was built in stone: 'Никол'скиеи список Новгородской четвёртой летописи', in Полное собрание русских летописей, 4/1: 602. The gate and sections of the stone walls from 1352 were unearthed in archaeological

the accounts is more apparent than real; the *Novgorodian First Chronicle*'s account of the events leading up to the rebuilding of Orekhov clearly indicates that Archbishop Vasilii not only blessed the undertaking, but was instrumental in its execution. The archbishop promoted, patronized and then personally oversaw the reconstruction of the fortress, which was built by Novgorodian workers. Thus the first account stresses the archbishop's role in the affair (since the *Novgorodian First Chronicle* was compiled under the auspices of the archbishops themselves),¹⁸ while the version found in the *Novgorodian Third Chronicle*, a shorter chronicle, emphasizes the Novgorodians' role in the actual construction of the fortress.

The blessing of any large or important undertaking by the local bishop was a common enough practice in medieval times in both Eastern and Western Christianity. However, Vasilii Kalika's role in establishing (or rather re-establishing) the fortress at Orekhov is somewhat perplexing since it is not clear why the Novgorodians would go to the archbishop and ask him to undertake such a task. Catholic prelates in the Middle Ages were, in addition to being churchmen, often also warriors and secular rulers of independent bishoprics or princes of the realm (especially in the Holy Roman Empire); Orthodox bishops, by contrast, were never secular rulers and were certainly not warriors or military commanders.¹⁹ Thus there seems, at first glance, no good reason why the Novgorodians would ask their archbishop to build the fortress. Indeed, given how important Orekhov was to Novgorod and the fact that its loss would mean essentially a slow death for Novgorod and its cultural greatness, it seemed perhaps a folly to entrust the rebuilding of the fortress to an ecclesiastic with no legitimate role in military affairs and no personal military

excavations in 1969 and can be seen just to the north of the ruins of the Church of St John in the middle of the fortress.

¹⁸ Indeed, the Younger Redaction breaks off in 1352, the year of Archbishop Vasilii's death, and is thought to have been written under his auspices.

¹⁹ There is a reference in the *Novgorodian Fourth Chronicle* to Archbishop Feofil (1470–80) withholding his cavalry, allowing it to attack the Pskovians but not the grand prince's Muscovite troops, at the Battle of Shelon' River in 1471. However, this is the only chronicle mentioning this event, causing some scholars to question its accuracy. In any event, there is no evidence that Archbishop Feofil or any of his predecessors personally led troops into battle. Most scholars believe that these were troops levied from the archbishop's estates or that the horses were raised on pastureland on these estates. The troops were actually led by *voevody* or other commanders: 'Окончание Списка Строевского Новгородской четвёртой летописи', in Полное собрание русских летописей, 4: 446–47; George Vernadsky and Michael Karpovich, *Russia at the Dawn of the Modern Age: A History of Russia*, vol. 4 (New Haven, 1959), p. 52; John L.I. Fennell, *Ivan the Great of Moscow* (London, 1961), p. 43. The archbishops of Novgorod also had a *druzhina*, that is a mounted (and armed) retinue, but this is not necessarily indicative of secular power, and the retinue may have served merely as a personal bodyguard or servants for the archbishops. See Boris D. Grekov, *Избранные труды*, 4 vols (Moskva, 1957–60), 3: 59–62, 93–94, 96, and Michael C. Paul, 'Secular Power and the Archbishops of Novgorod before the Muscovite Conquest', *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 8 (2007), 231–270 (here 260).

experience (so far as we know), a man whom the *Novgorodian First Chronicle* called ‘good, (gentle) and humble’, and who, prior to his episcopate, had been the priest Grigorii Kalika (‘the Pilgrim’) of the Church of SS Cosmos and Damian on Kholop (Slave) Street, which ran just north of the Detinets and the archiepiscopal compound in Novgorod.²⁰

True enough, the archbishops of Novgorod oversaw a considerable administration that carried out ecclesiastical functions in a vast territory and controlled a number of landed estates throughout the Novgorodian Land (although the extent of the archbishops’ land-holdings is uncertain before the end of the fifteenth century). The archbishops were also known to have carried out embassies and other civil functions on behalf of their city.²¹ They also built perhaps a third of the 300 churches that graced the medieval city and its environs.²² Vasilii himself is known to have patronized a number of church construction projects, iconography and chronicle-writing (thus indicating the wealth of the archiepiscopal office even at this time, to say nothing of Vasilii’s active role in a number of different spheres), but Orekhov was not one of the archbishops’ estates and the ability to administer the Church, its landed estates or even ecclesiastical construction projects did not necessarily readily translate into administering a construction project of a military nature, and one so crucial to the defence of Novgorodian interests.

Furthermore, building fortifications was not usually a task given to the archbishops of Novgorod. In fact, the bishops and archbishops of Novgorod had concentrated almost exclusively on church construction until the archiepiscopate of Vasilii Kalika, who along with the several churches that he had build, also

²⁰ Новгородская первая летопись, pp. 99, 342. The Younger Redaction inserts the word ‘gentle’ into the description. The Older Redaction gives his name as Grigorii Kaleka (the Cripple), while the Younger Redaction gives it as Grigorii Kalika (the Pilgrim). See also Новгородская четвёртая летопись, p. 263. The latter name is probably more accurate, since by his own account, Vasilii made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land via Constantinople some time prior to his episcopate. He wrote a letter to Bishop Feodor of Tver’ in which he argued that there was an earthly paradise in the East. One of his proofs is that he himself had visited Jerusalem and seen it: ‘Прибавление Софийской Первой Летописи’, in Полное собрание русских летописей, 6: 88; The letter is also produced in Памятники литературы древней Руси XIV – середина XV века, ed. Lev Aleksandrovich Dmitriev and Dmitrii Sergeevich Likhachev (Moskva, 1981), pp. 42–49, 531–34; ‘Софийская Первая Летопись’, in Полное собрание русских летописей, 6: 422–28; ‘Степенная книга’, in Полное собрание русских летописей, 21: 387–90. For a fuller discussion of Archbishop Vasilii Kalika and the office in general, see Michael C. Paul, “‘A Man Chosen by God’: The Office of Archbishop in Novgorod, Russia 1165–1478” (PhD dissertation, University of Miami, 2003).

²¹ On episcopal embassies in the medieval Russian Church in general, see Yaroslav Nikolaevich Shchapov, Государство и церковь древней Руси X–XIII вв. (Moskva, 1989), p. 179. For a discussion of embassies by the bishops and archbishops of Novgorod, see Paul, ‘Secular Power’, p. 249.

²² Paul, ‘Secular Power’, p. 249.

rebuilt part of the wall of the Detinets, the main fortress in Novgorod, in 1331–33.²³ The Detinets, however, was the archbishop's own compound, and his cathedral church, the Cathedral of Holy Wisdom, stood within it, so it is natural that the archbishops would oversee the maintenance of the Detinets' walls. Thus, this does not really help explain why the Novgorodians sent him off to the northern edge of their territory to rebuild a most important fortress. What is more telling is that in 1333–34, Archbishop Vasilii, along with Posadnik Fedor Danilovich and Tsyatskii Ostafii, built a wall 'from Il'ya's to St. Paul's', that is around the Trade Side of the city, a project that cannot be explained as being on Church land or as part of the archbishop's ecclesiastical functions.²⁴ The experience he gained in this and the earlier work on the Detinets may have recommended him for the later task at Orekhov.

Such a martial task, however, was usually seen as unbecoming of an Orthodox prelate.²⁵ Anna Komnene, daughter of the Byzantine emperor Alexios I Komnenos (1081–1118), wrote in her *Alexiad* of an incident where the Normans tried to cross the Adriatic Sea without being intercepted by the Byzantine fleet. When the flagship of the Byzantine fleet came upon one of the Normans and the Byzantine commander tried to board one of the Norman vessels, Anna told of the violent behaviour of a certain Latin priest who resisted first by firing several shots with his bow at the Byzantine commander. When he ran out of arrows, the priest picked up sling-stones and hurled them at the Byzantines. When he ran out of those, he threw barley cakes found in a sack nearby. All of this prompted Anna to remark, with

²³ The Detinets is first mentioned in chronicle accounts in 1044. The *Novgorodian First Chronicle* mentions its expansion in 1116. The fortifications at that time were most likely earthen embankments topped by wooden palisades. Stone towers and walls were built in 1302 (the chronicle does not mention the towers): Новгородская первая летопись, pp. 20, 91, 331; M.K. Aleshkovskii, 'Новгородский Детинец 1044–1430-х гг. (по материалам новых исследований)', *Архитектурное наследство* 14 (1962), pp. 3–26 (here 25); S.V. Troyanovskii, 'О некоторых результатах раскопок в Новгородском кремле', *Новгород и Новгородская Земля* 12 (1998), 58–70 (here 59). The chronicles note that in 1331, Archbishop Vasilii built (or rebuilt) 'a stone city' or 'fortress' (*gorod*) from St Vladimir's [Tower] to the [Chapel of the] Mother of God [over the eastern gate] and from the Mother of God to [the Church of] Boris and Gleb'. That is, he built most of the wall along the Volkhov River: Новгородская первая летопись, pp. 343, 345. The Older Redaction does not mention the beginning of construction in 1331, but notes that the walls were finished in 1333: Новгородская первая летопись, pp. 99–100. See also Troyanovskii, 'О некоторых результатах раскопок в Новгородском кремле', p. 59.

²⁴ Новгородская первая летопись, p. 346.

²⁵ Western bishops were often military leaders. For discussion of this phenomenon, see Friedrich von Hurter, *Geschichte Papst Innocenz des Dritten und seiner Zeitgenossen*, 3rd edn, 4 vols (Hamburg, 1841–44), 2: 292; Edgar Nathaniel Johnson, *The Secular Activities of the German Episcopate 919–1024* (Chicago, 1930–31), pp. 206–22; Paul, 'Secular Power', pp. 238–41.

apparent amazement if not disgust, that while the Byzantine and Orthodox clergy were forbidden by canon law and Church tradition to take up arms and fight,

The [Latin] race is no less devoted to religion than to war. This Latin, then, more man of action than priest, wore priestly garb and at the same time handled an oar and ready for naval action or war on land, fought sea and men alike.²⁶

And while Anna was writing in Constantinople more than two centuries before Archbishop Vasilii's rebuilding of Orekhov,²⁷ it is certainly true that the Russians held the Byzantine view of their bishops: thus, Russian Orthodox prelates were never seen as military commanders or warriors, even during the medieval period.²⁸ This would suggest that the people of Novgorod would have never even considered sending their archbishop on a task so unsuited for the office, but instead would have dispatched a more fitting official: a prince, *posadnik* (mayor), *tysyatskii* (thousandman),²⁹ or *voevoda* (general or commander). Why then did they send Vasilii Kalika?

An examination of the events leading up to Archbishop Vasilii's mission to Orekhov shows that he went to rebuild the fortifications at Orekhov because of the *religious* nature of the conflict along the Neva and the border between Swedish Finland and Russia in the mid-fourteenth century. At that time, Orekhov was quite literally a bulwark of Orthodox Novgorod against the encroachments of the Roman Catholic (or 'Latin') Swedes who, under their king, Magnus Eriksson (1316–74),³⁰

²⁶ Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad of Anna Comnena*, trans. E.R.A. Sewter (London, 1969), pp. 315–18 (here esp. 317); Steven Runciman, *The Eastern Schism: A Study of the Papacy and the Eastern Churches During the XIth and XIIth Centuries* (Oxford, 1955), pp. 83, 105; Michael Angold, *The Byzantine Empire, 1025–1204: A Political History*, 2nd edn (London, 1997), p. 166; cf. Paul, 'Secular Power', p. 242.

²⁷ Anna is known to have still been working on *The Alexiad* in 1148 and died in 1153. See Comnena, *The Alexiad*, p. 14.

²⁸ Metropolitan Kiprian (1375–1406), a Bulgarian sent to be Metropolitan of all Rus', drew a clear distinction between war and ecclesiastical service in a letter to Sergei of Radonezh and Hegumen Fedor of the Simonovskii Monastery, writing: 'I am a bishop, and not a military man': Православный собеседник (Kazan', 1860), pp. 84–85; G.M. Prokhorov, *Повесть о митре Русь и Византия в эпохи куликовской битвы* (Leningrad, 1978), p. 195; John Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia: A Study of Byzantino-Russian Relations in the Fourteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1981), pp. 209, 292; Paul, 'Secular Power', 243. While this is a generation after Vasilii Kalika, it is certainly in keeping with Anna Komnene's statement of more than two centuries earlier and suggests the continuity of this principle.

²⁹ The *tysyatskii* was originally the head of the Novgorodian town militia, but over time took on judicial and commercial functions as well.

³⁰ Magnus Eriksson was elected king by the Swedish nobles and reigned from 1319 to 1355 (as Magnus II). Briefly deposed by his son, Erik, he retook the throne on Erik's death in 1359, but was deposed again in 1363 by the Swedish nobles when he sold Scania

waged a crusade against the Novgorodians and the non-Russian tribes living in the Novgorodian lands. Thus it was not out of place for an ecclesiastic to be asked to see to the defence of Orthodoxy against Roman Catholic aggression.

There was an even more practical reason for the choice of Vasilii Kalika as the man sent to rebuild Orekhov: Novgorod had, in some sense, already tried everything else. The *Novgorodian First Chronicle* indicates that the Novgorodians had tried to get several Lithuanian and Muscovite princes to go to Orekhov to rebuild the fortress there and stem the Swedish advance in Karelia and in the Neva valley, but the Lithuanian prince withdrew his men and the Muscovite grand prince only sent his brother, Ivan, who in fact never made it to Orekhov and even did not remain long in Novgorod.³¹ Hence, not only did the Novgorodians ask their archbishop to go on a religious mission to defend Orthodoxy, but there is even a sense of desperation in their action.

Sten's War, 1337–1339

Before looking at the immediate events surrounding the destruction of the old wooden fortress at Orekhov and Vasilii Kalika's reconstruction in stone, it is important to look at the relations between Novgorod and Sweden and the events

to Denmark. He inherited the throne of Norway from his maternal grandfather, Haakon V (1270–1319), and reigned (as Magnus VII) from 1319 (he attained his majority in both Sweden and Norway in 1332) until 1343 when he abdicated for his son Haakon VI (1343–80). He served as regent of Norway until his son obtained his majority in 1355. After his deposition in 1363, he returned to Norway where he died in a storm at sea in December 1374. See Peter and Birgit Sawyer, *Medieval Scandinavia: From Conversion to Reformation, ca. 800–1500* (Minneapolis, 1993), pp. 70–71; Franklin D. Scott, *Sweden: The Nation's History* (Minneapolis, 1977), pp. 72–76. According to the (apocryphal) *Rukopisanie Magnusha Sveiskago korolya*, purportedly an autobiography of Magnus Eriksson that has been inserted into the *Novgorodian Fourth Chronicle* and the *Sofia First Chronicle* under the year 1352 and is also found in the *Stepennaya Kniga*, the king actually did not drown off Norway, but eventually saw the error of his Catholic ways, converted to Orthodoxy and entered the Holy Saviour Monastery on the Polna River (apparently on the west side of the Karelian Isthmus), taking the monastic name Grigorii: 'Новгородская четвёртая летопись', pp. 281–82; 'Софийская первая летопись: Старшего извода', in Полное собрание русских летописей, 6: 429–31; Степенная книга, pp. 390–91. See also Lind, 'Consequences of the Baltic Crusades in Target Areas', pp. 145–46; Lind, 'Религиозно-политические предпосылки "Рукописания кореля свейского Магнуша" по шведским и русским источникам', in Древнейшие государства Восточной Европы 1999 (Moskva, 2001), pp. 211–29; Lind, 'The Russian Testament of King Magnus Eriksson – A Hagiographic Text?', in *Medieval Spirituality in Scandinavia and Europe: A Collection of Essays in Honor of Tore Nyberg*, ed. Lars Bisgaard et al. (Odense, 2001), pp. 195–212; Lind, 'The Russian Sources of King Magnus Eriksson's Campaign against Novgorod 1348–1351 – Reconsidered', *Mediaeval Scandinavia* 12 (1988), 248–72.

³¹ Paul, 'Secular Power', p. 254.

surrounding them, particularly during Vasilii's archiepiscopate, to better understand the events of 1348–52.

When we left off, the Swedes and Novgorodians had made peace in 1323, and the frontier was quiet for several years after that. The *Novgorodian First Chronicle* notes that in 1333, Prince Narimont, 'called in baptism Gleb', the son of the Lithuanian grand prince Gediminas, had sent his son Aleksandr to the Novgorodians, and the Novgorodians had given Aleksandr control of Orekhov; but how this relates to the Swedes, even with the fortresses standing along the frontier, is not made apparent in the chronicle. The chronicle entry, however, indicates the importance of finding an Orthodox service prince to defend Novgorod, since Narimont's baptismal name is prominently mentioned. This suggests that the Novgorodians would not accept a service prince who was still pagan (as many Lithuanians still were), and certainly not a Catholic one,³² although there were very few, if any, Catholics among the Lithuanian princes at this time.³³ The religious clash between Catholicism and Orthodoxy (and even paganism) stands behind this emphasis on religious affiliation, although it is not openly stated at this point. The tone of the chronicle also indicates that the Novgorodians were displeased with Narimont and his son (or at least the chronicler was). Thus the chronicler notes that as late as 1338, 'Prince Narimont remained in Lithuania', despite the fact that the Novgorodians sent urgently for him: 'He even withdrew his son Aleksandr

³² A draft treaty from 1471 indicates that the Novgorodians eventually did (or were going to) accept the Catholic king of Poland, Kazimierz, as their prince, but the treaty stipulated: 'You, illustrious King, shall not take our Greek Orthodox faith away from us, and we shall appoint our Archbishop of our free will, whomever it pleases us, Novgorod the Great, in our Orthodox Christianity. And you, illustrious King, shall not erect Roman [Catholic] churches in Novgorod the Great, nor in the dependent towns of Novgorod, nor in all the Novgorodian land': Грамоты Великого Новгорода и Пскова, pp. 129–32, no. 77.

³³ Lithuania did not formally convert to Christianity until 1386, when, by the Union of Krewo, Grand Duke Jogailo became king of Poland, taking the name Władysław II. Grand Duke (and briefly King) Mindaugas apparently converted to Catholicism in the mid-thirteenth century, but was assassinated in 1262, due perhaps, in part, to his conversion. Other princes converted to Orthodoxy during the fourteenth century (as the case of Narimont indicates), including Grand Prince Vytautas, who took the Orthodox name Aleksandr (other sources give his Orthodox baptismal name as Simeon; Alexander was said to be his Catholic baptismal name, which he used in most documents) before converting to Catholicism in the 1380s: Andrius Valevicius, 'Orthodoxy in Lithuania before Union with Poland', *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 45 (2000), 479–89. Vytautas used the name Alexander mainly in documents with Poland and the West, although he on occasion did so in documents regarding his Russian lands. For examples of Latin and Russian documents (transliterated) which use the name, see *Codex Privilegorum Vitoldi Magni ducis Lithuaniae 1386–1430*, ed. Jerzy Ochmanski (Warsaw, 1986), no. 8, pp. 12–13, nos 9 and 10, pp. 15, 16. For a Russian document where he uses the name, see Акты относящиеся к истории России, собранные и изданные Археографической комиссией, 5 vols (Sankt-Peterburg, 1846–53) 1: 23, no. 9.

from Orekhov, leaving only his *namestnik* (lieutenant).³⁴ The Novgorodians' distress is understandable since the Swedes had renewed their attacks on Orthodox Christians in the Korel land (Karelia) in 1337,³⁵ when the Korel people (i.e. the Karelians) 'having brought in the *Nemtsy* [Swedes],³⁶ killed many Russians of Novgorod and Ladoga who were trading among them, and all the Christians [i.e. Orthodox Karelians] who lived among them,³⁷ and they themselves fled into the town of the *Nemtsy* [Viborg] and then slew many Christians from the town of the *Nemtsy*'.³⁸ In response to this, the Novgorodians called on Narimont to come to Orekhov (it seems his son was too young to be a reliable war-chief), apparently to make a show of force, or perhaps even in the hope that he would campaign against the Karelians and the Swedes to avenge the murder of the Ladogan and Novgorodian merchants and the Orthodox Karelians, and to protect any that remained. Certainly, with Narimont in Orekhov, the Novgorodians farther south would be protected from further encroachments by the Catholic Swedes.

Apparently frustrated by Narimont's absence, the Novgorodians sent a force under Posadnik Fedor to Orekhov in 1338, which by then had fallen into Swedish hands. After parleying with 'the *Nemtsy voevoda*, Sten', the force returned to Novgorod without concluding peace. Following this, the Swedes 'warred much with the Korel people around Lake Onega', to the north-east of Lake Ladoga, and even burned the *posad* (suburbs – the less defended districts of town around

³⁴ Новгородская первая летопись, p. 349; Новгородская четвёртая летопись, p. 267.

³⁵ The Swedes and Novgorodians had concluded a peace at Orekhov in 1323 after a series of raids and campaigns stretching back into the thirteenth century: Janet Martin, *Medieval Russia 980–1584* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 183–85. Today a modern stone monument with an inscription in both Russian and Swedish stands in the fortress next to the excavated section of the fortress walls from 1352 and commemorates the Peace of Orekhov.

³⁶ *Nemtsy* now means 'Germans', but earlier it meant any Western European. The name comes from *nemoi*, 'mute', because the Western Europeans could not speak or understand any Slavic language. See Lind, 'Consequences of the Baltic Crusades in Target Areas', pp. 137–42.

³⁷ When they use the term 'Christian', the Novgorodian chroniclers mean Orthodox Christians, excluding Catholics. In contrast, German sources, such as the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* and Henry of Livonia's *Chronicon Livoniae*, use the term 'Christian' to mean Catholics, not including the Orthodox. See Thomas S. Noonan, 'Medieval Russia, The Mongols, and the West: Novgorod's Relations with the Baltic 1100–1350', *Mediaeval Studies* 37 (1975), 316–39; Anti Selart, 'Confessional Conflict and Political Cooperation: Livonia and Russia in the Thirteenth Century', in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, pp. 151–76 (here 157).

³⁸ Новгородская первая летопись, p. 348; Новгородская четвёртая летопись, p. 266 (s.a. 1338).

the fortress) of Ladoga, but could not take the fortress itself.³⁹ The Novgorodians retaliated by sending troops into Swedish-held Karelia under the command of several *voevody*, and pillaged the area, 'burning their crops and killing their cattle' and returning with captives.⁴⁰ The Swedes followed this with a campaign of their own, marching out of Viborg to attack Toldoga, but they were defeated by Novgorodian troops from Kopor'e.⁴¹

The pillaging and fighting dragged on into the winter of 1338, when Swedish envoys arrived in Novgorod from Viborg and reached a peace settlement, claiming that Sten had acted on his own without the approval of the king of Sweden. The treaty was based on that reached by Grand Prince Yurii Danilovich fifteen years earlier at Orekhov, but the chronicle noted that 'concerning the Kobylich Korel, they agreed to ask the prince of the Swedes'.⁴² With this in mind, Novgorod sent several envoys to negotiate with the king of Sweden in 1339. They found Magnus at Lyudovl, 'in the Murman country',⁴³ and concluded a treaty there concerning the Karelians. The chronicle notes that 'the *Vladyka* [Archbishop Vasilii], on his part, sent his nephew [*sestricha*, his sister's son] Matvei', indicating that the archbishop was a party to the treaty.⁴⁴ The chronicle does not immediately give the reason for the inclusion of the archbishop's nephew in the embassy, merely explaining that they 'concluded peace with him on the terms of previous treaties'. The chronicle then enumerates the specific provisions concerning the Karelians: 'If ours escape to you, slay or hang them, if yours to us; we will do the same to them; that they make no treachery between us.'⁴⁵ However, the next line makes it clear why Matvei was sent by his uncle to conclude the treaty: he was there to defend the Orthodox converts among the Karelians because the treaty goes on to say: 'But these we will not deliver, [those] who have been baptized into our faith; there are but few of them; the rest have all died by the wrath of God.'⁴⁶

Thus, Archbishop Vasilii saw his role in the treaty of 1339 as that of defender of the Orthodox Christians among the Karelians who had fled from Swedish-held (i.e. Catholic) territory into the Novgorodian Land, particularly in the light of the fact that many such Karelians had been killed during the war. His nephew was sent to see to this, and was apparently successful in getting a clause inserted into the

³⁹ Новгородская первая летопись, р. 348; 'Новгородская четвёртая летопись', р. 267.

⁴⁰ Новгородская первая летопись, pp. 348–49.

⁴¹ Новгородская первая летопись, р. 349. On the Swedish campaign of 1337–39, see also Igor Pavlovich Shaskol'skii, 'Конфликт Новгорода со Швецией в 1337–1339 гг.', Новгородский исторический сборник 14 (1993), 52–71.

⁴² Новгородская первая летопись, р. 349.

⁴³ Новгородская первая летопись, р. 350.

⁴⁴ Новгородская первая летопись, р. 350.

⁴⁵ Новгородская первая летопись, р. 350.

⁴⁶ Новгородская первая летопись, р. 350. See also Lind, 'Consequences of the Baltic Crusades in Target Areas', p. 145; Paul, 'Secular Power', pp. 253–54.

treaty that allowed the Novgorodians to protect the Orthodox Karelians rather than kill them as they did the pagan Karelians who crossed from Swedish-held Karelia into the Novgorodian Land.

King Magnus Eriksson's Crusade, 1348–1351

The *Novgorodian First Chronicle* is silent about the Swedes for the next nine years. Then in 1348, King Magnus suddenly appears again, having sent envoys to Novgorod, who challenged the Novgorodians to debate with his 'philosophers' (Catholic theologians) over the true faith, stipulating that the loser would accept the religion of the winner. Archbishop Vasilii, in consultation with the *posadniki*, prudently told the king's emissaries that Novgorod had received its faith from Constantinople and thus he should send his philosophers there if he wished to debate.⁴⁷ The king did not take this lightly. In fact, his challenge was probably merely a pretext for launching a crusade against the Novgorodians. The Novgorodians sent several envoys to Magnus to negotiate several outstanding issues between them, and they met up with Magnus near Orekhov, since Magnus was encamped on nearby Berezov Island 'with all his forces'. But Magnus would not negotiate. At first he told the envoys: 'I have no grievance whatever against you', implying that the Novgorodians refusal to debate his philosophers had not offended him, but he then turned around and demanded: 'Adopt my faith, or I will march against you with my whole force.'⁴⁸ The Novgorodian envoys withdrew in the face of this threat, shutting themselves up in Orekhov as Magnus led his army up the Neva after them and laid siege to the island fortress.

Economically and politically, the king's attack was extremely dangerous for Novgorod, since in leading his forces up the Neva, Magnus cut off the main Novgorodian trade route into the Baltic. But the Novgorodians and the Swedes both emphasized the *religious* nature of the conflict in their chronicles, and do not mention the political or economic impacts of the crusade. Indeed, Magnus had been encouraged by his cousin Birgitta Birgersdotter to crusade against the 'heathens' at the head of the Gulf of Finland (the Karelians, many of whom were not yet Christians, and the Russians, who were, in the Catholic view, the wrong kind of Christians), and a crusade had been preached against the Karelians in 1340.⁴⁹ The *Novgorodian First Chronicle* related that: 'Magnus came up against the fortress with his whole force and began baptizing the Izhera people into his

⁴⁷ Новгородская первая летопись, p. 359; 'Новгородская четвёртая летопись', p. 276; 'Степенная Книга', in Полное собрание русских летописей, 21: 386–87.

⁴⁸ Новгородская первая летопись, p. 359; 'Новгородская четвёртая летопись', p. 276; Lind, 'Consequences of the Baltic Crusades in Target Areas', p. 145.

⁴⁹ *Finlands Medeltidsurkunder*, 1: 180, no. 473; Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades: The Baltic and the Catholic Frontier, 1100–1525* (Minneapolis, 1980), p. 187.

own faith, and let loose his troops among those who refused baptism.⁵⁰ Likewise, the fifteenth-century Swedish rhymed chronicle known as the *Förbindelsedikt* remarked that the inhabitants of the Neva region ‘had their beards shaved’, meaning they were (forcibly) converted from Orthodoxy (in which the men customarily wore full-beards) to Catholicism (in which the men shaved).⁵¹ In response, the Novgorodians sent several men at the head of a small company (Russ. *družhina*) to attack the Swedes and break the siege, and ‘through the prayers of the Holy Mother of God and with the help of Holy Wisdom and of the holy martyrs Boris and Gleb’, they killed 500 Swedes, took others captive, suffering (if the chronicler is to be believed) only three dead among their own company.⁵²

Despite this lopsided victory, the Swedes did not lift the siege of Orekhov, and so the Novgorodians, Pskovians and others gathered at Ladoga to confront the Swedes. They also sent envoys to Grand Prince Simeon pleading desperately for him to ‘defend your patrimony according to your kissing of the cross [i.e. your oath]; the king of the Swedes is coming against us!’ Although Simeon sent word that he would gladly come, and did in fact set out, he turned back near Torzhok (Novy Torg) having barely even entered the Novgorodian Land; he returned to Moscow and sent his brother, Ivan, instead.⁵³ Ivan managed to make it to Novgorod, but dallied in the city and would not set out to join the army at Ladoga. When word came that the fortress of Orekhov had fallen to the Swedes, he returned to Moscow ‘without the *Vladyka*’s blessing’.⁵⁴ This last remark indicates that Archbishop Vasilii was pressing him to defend Novgorod from the Swedish crusade and that his departure met with Vasilii’s disapproval.

The fall of Orekhov had dire consequences since it gave the Swedes complete control of the Neva River valley and, as has already been noted, gave them a place from which to raid into Lake Ladoga against the towns along the lakeshore. From such a vantage point, the Swedes could cut off Novgorod’s trade at will and could also send missions and armed companies up into Karelia, which was now

⁵⁰ Новгородская первая летопись, pp. 359–60. See also ‘Новгородская четвёртая летопись’, p. 277. Crusaders had also sought to convert the Karelians and Izhorians in the previous century. See Evgeniya L. Nazarova, ‘The Crusades against Votians and Izhorians in the Thirteenth Century’, in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, pp. 177–95.

⁵¹ *Förbindelsedikten*, ed. Gustav Edvard Klemming, known as ‘Sammanfogningen mellan Gamla och Nya Krönikan’, in *Svenska Medeltidens Rim-krönikor*, 3 vols (Stockholm, 1865), 1: 177, l. 168, cited in Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades*, p. 186.

⁵² Новгородская первая летопись, p. 360. The *Novgorodian Fourth Chronicle* states there were 800 Swedish captives and nine Novgorodian dead. ‘Новгородская четвёртая летопись’, pp. 278–79.

⁵³ Новгородская первая летопись, p. 360; ‘Новгородская четвёртая летопись’, p. 277.

⁵⁴ Новгородская первая летопись, p. 360; ‘Новгородская четвёртая летопись’, pp. 277–78.

cut off from Novgorod. Cutting off trade could be employed to force Novgorod to go over to the Catholic faith, which was the main goal of Magnus's campaign; papal legates in Estonia and Livonia had preached a crusade against the Russians, and Magnus had received letters from the pope urging him to go on crusade and allowing him to levy a tax to pay for it.⁵⁵ Again, both the Swedes and the Novgorodians understood this clash primarily in religious terms even though there were economic and political factors also involved. Thus Archbishop Vasilii had sent his nephew as part of the embassy negotiating the treaty with Sweden in 1339 in order to defend the Orthodox Karelians, and now he was urging the princes to defend Orekhov (and Novgorod which it protected) from further attacks by the Swedish crusaders.

With Prince Ivan absent, the Novgorodians themselves set out and invested Orekhov, besieging it from August 1348 to just before Easter 1349; the island fortress finally fell to them on the Tuesday of Holy Week (9 March). Thus Orekhov had once again been taken by the Novgorodians and the Swedes' southern advance was stopped. The following year, the Novgorodians marched up and attacked Viborg and ravaged the districts around the town before returning to Novgorod. Later that year, they sent emissaries to Dorpat (mod. Tartu, Estonia) and exchanged prisoners with the Swedes.⁵⁶ However, the threat from Sweden did not abate with the prisoner exchange.⁵⁷ In 1350, Magnus launched another crusade, but apparently never reached the Neva. He spent much of the year in Estonia, trying to drum up support for a new crusade against Novgorod. He demanded that the Hanseatic merchants cease trading with Novgorod, but was ignored.⁵⁸ He gained the support of Pope Clement VI, who issued three bulls in Avignon on 14 March 1351: the first authorized the archbishops of Nidaros, Uppsala, and Lund and their suffragan bishops to preach a crusade against Russia as soon as the plague abated; the second called on the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order to give assistance to King Magnus in the crusade; and the third called on the bishops of Ösel and Dorpat in Livonia to also preach a crusade against the Russians.⁵⁹

While these preparations were being made in Sweden and the German cities along the Baltic coast, Orekhov stood in ruins, having changed hands a number of times between the Swedes and the Novgorodians. Now that the Novgorodians

⁵⁵ Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades*, p. 188.

⁵⁶ Новгородская первая летопись, pp. 361–62; Новгородская четвёртая летопись, p. 279.

⁵⁷ In fact, the plague severely limited the Swedes' effort to relaunch the crusade, but the extent to which the plague hampered the Swedish war effort would not have been known to the Novgorodians at the time.

⁵⁸ *Diplomatarium Suecanum*, ed. Johan Gustaf Liljegen (Stockholm, 1829–), no. 4669; cited in Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades*, p. 187.

⁵⁹ Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades*, pp. 188–89; *Finlands Medeltidsurkund*, 1: 237–39, no. 588 and 239, no. 589; Lind, 'Consequences of the Baltic Crusades in Target Areas', p. 146.

had it once again, the fortifications urgently needed to be rebuilt in order to defend Orthodox Novgorod from another attack from Catholic Sweden, and to secure her vital trade route down the Neva and into the Gulf of Finland and the Baltic Sea.

Orekhov: The Bulwark of Orthodoxy

The question was who would oversee the reconstruction. Over the previous decade or so, the Lithuanian and Muscovite princes had shown themselves to be unreliable. Archbishop Vasilii Kalika, in contrast, had shown himself to be an energetic promoter not only of Novgorod and its defence – sending emissaries to conclude treaties and urging princes to go up and defend the frontier – but he had also shown himself to be a conscientious protector of the Orthodox flock entrusted to his care, both Russians and Karelians.⁶⁰ In addition, the archbishops of Novgorod were very wealthy, gaining from their landed estates tax exemptions, market fees in Novgorod, fines from ecclesiastical and secular courts they oversaw in the city, and other sources. And while a *voevoda* or boyar might be sent, he probably would not have the economic resources available to him that the archbishop of Novgorod had, and might not have the strong interest in preserving Orthodoxy that Archbishop Vasilii had already shown. Vasilii also had experience in patronizing the constructions of fortifications in Novgorod going back to the first year of his archiepiscopate. He could bring in masters and workers to build a similar fortification at Orekhov. In light of all these facts, it is quite understandable that the Novgorodians would petition their archbishop to rebuild the fortifications at Orekhov.

Archbishop Vasilii's actions are made clearer not only by an understanding of events along the Novgorodian frontier with Swedish Finland, but also may have been influenced by other events at that same time that unfolded sometimes at quite a distance from Novgorod. In 1331, Grand Prince Gediminas of Lithuania, a pagan, along with Prince Aleksandr Mikhailovich of Tver' (then exiled to Pskov after leading an uprising against the Tatars in 1327) had sent a candidate named Arsenii to Metropolitan Feoktist in an effort to have him named bishop of Pskov.⁶¹ Pskov was then part of the eparchy of Novgorod, and Archbishop Vasilii certainly would not have wanted to lose control over Pskov, itself an important commercial

⁶⁰ He is said to have been remiss in dealing with heresy in his eparchy, but I am not convinced this was the case; it is, in any event, beyond the scope of this chapter. See Natal'ya Aleksandrovna Kazakova, and Yakov Solomonovich Lur'e, *Антифеодальные еретические движения на Руси XIV–начала XVI века* (Moskva, 1955), pp. 333–38.

⁶¹ *Новгородская первая летопись*, p. 343; 'Новгородская четвертая летопись', p. 264. While Gediminas was himself a pagan, his chancery was staffed by Franciscan monks, and if this was known to the Russians, may have led them to suspect that the grand prince might one day convert to Catholicism or otherwise might support Catholic efforts against Orthodoxy. See *Gedimino Laiskai*, ed. V.T. Pashuto and I.V. Shtal (Vilnius, 1966).

centre and source of funds for the archbishops of Novgorod. Indeed, no one would want to see their power diminished, probably even if money was not involved. Likewise, there were also efforts made throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries to establish new metropolitanates in Lithuania and West Russia (Galicia and Volhynia), thus dividing the Russian Church and leading to considerable fear among the Russian hierarchs that any Lithuanian or West Russian province, led by a pagan or, after 1387, a Catholic Lithuanian grand prince, would either be neglected or, even worse, become Catholic. Any province of Lithuania might include Novgorod itself, and thus the great cultural centre of Russia might be lost politically and religiously. The Russian Church, led by the metropolitans of Kiev,⁶² fought zealously to keep the province intact, partly for reasons of prestige to be certain, but also out of fear for the Orthodox Christians in the region. A weaker, smaller Russian Church (or state) might then be carved up further and destroyed. Indeed, in 1349, while Orekhov was being besieged and finally taken by the Novgorodians, the king of Poland (called 'the king of Krakow' in the Novgorodian Chronicles) seized the region of Volhynia 'by deceit' and, the chronicle notes, 'did much injury to Christians, and he converted the sacred churches to the Latin service hated by God'.⁶³ Thus their worst fears seemed to be coming true.

Volhynia was far off to the south-west of Novgorod, part of what is now north-western Ukraine. Its loss to Poland had no immediate impact on Novgorod's security or the vitality of Orthodoxy in the Novgorodian Land, and the archbishops of Novgorod certainly had no jurisdiction there. But any thoughtful Orthodox Christian would have hurt to see it fall to the Catholics and see their fellow Orthodox persecuted or forcibly converted to Catholicism. Archbishop Vasilii also had personal ties to the region. He had been consecrated archbishop in Vladimir-in-Volhynia in 1331;⁶⁴ he had also paid a visit to Metropolitan Feognost there three years later.⁶⁵ Feognost, a Greek appointed to head the province of Kiev by the patriarch of Constantinople, had resided for a number of years in Volhynia; its conquest by the Poles and their efforts to convert the Orthodox to Catholicism would have been a personal blow to Metropolitan Feognost, who was charged with protecting the Orthodox of the province of Kiev (of which Volhynia was a part). The metropolitan was on good terms with Archbishop Vasilii and, indeed, showed him particular favour by given him a *polystaurion* or cross-covered chasuble, a

⁶² While the metropolitans moved to Vladimir-on-Klyazma in 1299 and to Moscow in 1325, the title remained metropolitan of Kiev until 1448, when Moscow began electing its own metropolitans without reference to Constantinople.

⁶³ Новгородская первая летопись, p. 361; 'Новгородская четвёртая летопись', p. 279.

⁶⁴ Новгородская первая летопись, p. 343; 'Новгородская четвёртая летопись', p. 264; 'Московский летописный свод конца XV века', in Полное собрание русских летописей, 25: 170; Paul, 'Episcopal Election in Novgorod, Russia', pp. 269–70.

⁶⁵ Новгородская первая летопись, p. 346; 'Новгородская четвёртая летопись', p. 266.

special mark of distinction for Orthodox churchmen, when Archbishop Vasilii had visited him in Moscow in 1346. His personal ties to the metropolitan (by then in Moscow) and his memories of his visits to him in Volhynia would have made its loss perhaps sharper still to Archbishop Vasilii.⁶⁶

Thus, the Polish invasion of far-off Volhynia may have personally affected Archbishop Vasilii; that, coupled with the Swedish crusade, wars with the German cities in Livonia and Lithuanian raids and encroachment from the west, may have given Archbishop Vasilii, Metropolitan Feognost and the Russian Church in general the sense that they were beset on all sides by pagan and (worse still) Catholic foes. Thus, Archbishop Vasilii's mission to rebuild the fortifications at Orekhov would have had added importance given this sense of danger to Orthodoxy. He was not merely rebuilding a fortress on the frontier between Novgorod and Swedish Finland; nor was he simply protecting Novgorod's vital trade routes, both of which were quite reasonable goals in and of themselves. Perhaps more importantly to the prelate, he was building up a safeguard for Orthodoxy against the violent and troubling inroads then being made by the Swedish and German crusaders (and in some sense even by the Poles further afield), hoping in so doing, to protect his much beleaguered flock and the Orthodox city of Novgorod the Great.

⁶⁶ Новгородская первая летопись, р. 358; 'Новгородская четвёртая летопись', р. 276.

Chapter 13

Orthodox Churches in Medieval Livonia¹

Anti Selart

Introduction

During the thirteenth century, crusaders conquered Livonia (the territory of present-day Estonia and Latvia), bringing its indigenous communities into the Catholic world. For Livonian political rhetoric in the period after the conquest important roles were played by the pagan threat represented by Lithuania, as well as by the Orthodox Christian threat represented by the Russian principalities. The Russian threat became an increasingly important political theme in the fifteenth century, following the acceptance of Catholic Christianity by Lithuania in 1386.² Periodic military clashes with the Orthodox Russians had taken place in Livonia since the beginning of the crusading period, and the Livonian political system finally collapsed following the Muscovite attack in 1558. While this confessional confrontation is repeatedly highlighted in both narrative and documentary sources, it is surprising to find that in Livonia there existed Orthodox churches which were tolerated by the Catholic authorities. The aim of this chapter is to discuss the legal and social framework of the foundation and existence of these churches.

The Orthodox (or 'Russian') churches were situated in the socially and ethnically stratified towns of Livonia. Urban life there emerged in the course of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, as a result of the commercial role of the early towns in mediating merchandise from Russia to Western Europe and vice versa.³ This was also the period when an association of German traders developed into the Hanseatic League, which was to become the main institution of economic and cultural integration in northern Europe in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. The merchant elite and a great part of the population of the Livonian towns were immigrants from Germany or descendants of such immigrants, although the common people were mostly of indigenous origin, and are referred to in the sources as *Undeutsche* ('non-Germans'). There were also people of Scandinavian origin in some of the coastal towns, and in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries

¹ Research for this article was supported by the Eesti Teadusfond, Tallinn (grant no. 5514) and *Deutsches Rechtswörterbuch* (Heidelberg).

² *Deutsche und Deutschland aus russischer Sicht 11.–17. Jahrhundert*, ed. Dagmar Herrmann (München, 1988); Anti Selart, 'Confessional Conflict and Political Co-operation: Livonia and Russia in the Thirteenth Century', in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, ed. Alan V. Murray (Aldershot, 2001), pp. 151–76.

³ Detlef Kattinger, *Die Gotländische Genossenschaft: Der frühhansisch-gotländische Handel in Nord- und Westeuropa* (Köln, 1999).

there was even a small population of Russian origin. Several Russians, at least in Riga and Dorpat (mod. Tartu, Estonia), even had rights as burgesses at that time.⁴

At the end of the twelfth century the Finnic Estonians and Livs, and the Baltic Lettgallians and Semgallians, along with the ethnically mixed inhabitants of Curonia, were regarded as pagans in the Western sources. However, Christianity was not completely unfamiliar in a land situated between the Christianized countries of Germany, Scandinavia and Russia. The eastern parts of Livonian territory had contacts with Russian Orthodoxy from an early stage, although these contacts should not be overemphasized, since peripheral regions of Russia, particularly those bordering directly on Estonian territory, were in effect also pagan at that time.⁵ Nevertheless, Orthodox princes ruled in Kokenhusen (mod. Koknese, Latvia) and Gerzike (mod. Jersika, Latvia) situated on the River Dūna (mod. Daugava/Zapadnaya Dvina), while the province of Tolowa (Latv. Tālava) in the north-east of Lettgallia accepted Orthodox baptism from Pskov around 1200. There were Orthodox churches and consequently clerics in Gerzike and perhaps also in Kokenhusen.⁶ The pagan Livs in the Dūna estuary were tributaries to the Russian prince of Polotsk (mod. Polatsk, Belarus). The dominion of Polotsk over the lands along the Dūna soon collapsed, however. In 1209, Albert von Buxhövdn, bishop of Riga (1199–1229), established his rule over Kokenhusen, and also forced Prince Vsevolod of Gerzike into accepting his overlordship, while in 1212 Prince Vladimir of Polotsk gave up his requirement of tribute from the Livs. When the complete subjugation of Gerzike to the control of Riga and Catholicization came about is not precisely known, but it probably occurred in the 1230s. Some archaeological evidence has even been found from the fourteenth

⁴ Indriķis Šterns, 'Latvieši un krievi viduslaiku Rīgā', *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls* 2 (1996), 22–54; Norbert Angermann, 'Русские и белорусские купцы в средневековой Ливонии', in *От Древней Руси к России нового времени: Сборник статей к 70-летию А.Л. Хорошкевич*, ed. Valentin L. Yanin (Moskva, 2003), pp. 264–71; Anti Selart, 'Russians in Livonian Towns in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries', in *Segregation – Integration – Assimilation: Religious and Ethnic Groups in the Medieval Towns of Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. Derek Keene et al. (Farnham, 2009, forthcoming).

⁵ Jüri Selirand, 'Von der Verbreitung der ersten Elemente des Christentums bei den Esten', in *Rapports du IIIe Congrès International d'Archéologie Slave, Bratislava 7–14 septembre 1975*, ed. Bohuslav Chropovský, 2 vols (Bratislava, 1979), 1: 713–20; Enn Tarvel, 'Mission und Glaubenswechsel in Estland und Livland im 11.–13. Jahrhundert aufgrund sprachlicher Quellen', in *Rom und Byzanz im Norden. Mission und Glaubenswechsel im Ostseeraum während des 8.–14. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Michael Müller-Wille, 2 vols (Stuttgart, 1997), 2: 57–67; Ēvalds Mugurēvičs, 'Die Verbreitung des Christentums in Lettland vom 11. Jahrhundert bis zum Anfang des 13. Jahrhunderts', in *Rom und Byzanz im Norden*, 2: 81–96.

⁶ Evgeniya L. Nazarova, 'Православие и социальная структура общества в Латвии (XI–XIII вв.)', in *Феодализм в России: Сборник статей и воспоминаний посвященный памяти академика Л.В. Черепнина*, ed. Valentin L. Yanin (Moskva, 1987), pp. 201–11 (here 202).

and fifteenth centuries which might demonstrate a continuous Orthodox influence on the popular culture of eastern Latvia.⁷

Ecclesiae Mercatorum

Along the north coast of Estonia there ran an old and important seaway leading to Novgorod. Further to the south, the Dūna gave access to Polotsk, a route which continued via Vitebsk (mod. Vitsebsk, Belarus) to Smolensk, which was situated on the Dnepr, a river discharging into the Black Sea. Even closer to Livonia was Pskov. These Russian centres had emerged and developed in close contact with Western Europe, in particular Scandinavia, ever since the Viking Age. Scandinavian and German merchants had established 'factories', that is commercial agencies (Ger. *Kontore*), in Novgorod and Smolensk even before the Christianization of Livonia. These *Kontore* included churches, which served as the basis for the historian Paul Johansen (1901-65) to devise the concept of 'merchants' churches' (Lat. *ecclesiae mercatorum*); by this he meant churches belonging to and controlled by a merchant association, which not only served the purpose of religious observances but also fulfilled the functions of warehouses, sites for concluding business transactions and so on.⁸ As these churches simultaneously served as centres of mercantile agencies, the commercial enclaves were identified with their churches. Several historians have criticized this concept,⁹ but in the particular case of a church belonging to a

⁷ Evalds Mugarēvičs, 'Interactions between Indigenous and Western Culture in Livonia in the 13th to 16th centuries', in *From the Baltic to the Black Sea: Studies in Medieval Archaeology*, ed. David Austin and Leslie Alcock (London, 1990), pp. 168-78 (here 176).

⁸ Paul Johansen, 'Umriss und Aufgaben der hansischen Siedlungsgeschichte und Kartographie', *Hansische Geschichtsblätter* 73 (1955), 1-105 (here 37-40); Johansen, 'Die Kaufmannskirche im Ostseegebiet', in *Studien zu den Anfängen des europäischen Städtewesens*, ed. Theodor Mayer (Lindau, 1958), pp. 499-525; Johansen, 'Die Kaufmannskirche', in *Die Zeit der Stadtgründung im Ostseeraum*, ed. Mårten Stenberger (Visby, 1965), pp. 85-134. See also Vsevolod Slessarev, 'Ecclesiae Mercatorum and the Rise of Merchant Colonies', *Business History Review* 41 (1967), 177-97; John G. Davies, *The Secular Use of Church Buildings* (London, 1968), pp. 36-95; Ondrej R. Halaga, 'Typy kupeckých domov a novgorodský Peterhof', *Slovanský Přehled* 61 (1975), 467-81; Klaus Krüger, 'Church and Church Business in Hanseatic Agencies', in *Essays in Hanseatic History*, ed. Klaus Friedland and Paul Richards (Dereham, 2005), pp. 80-93.

⁹ See, for example, Hugo Yrwing, 'De s.k. köpmanskyrkorna', *Fornvännen* 75 (1980), 44-57; Bernd-Ulrich Hergemöller, 'Stadt und Kirche im Mittelalter', in *Lippstadt: Beiträge zur Stadtgeschichte*, ed. Wilfried Ehbrecht, 2 vols (Lippstadt, 1985), 1: 123-56 (here 127-28); Hergemöller, 'Verfassungsrechtliche Beziehungen zwischen Klerus und Stadt im spätmittelalterlichen Braunschweig', in *Rat und Verfassung im mittelalterlichen Braunschweig: Festschrift zum 600jährigen Bestehen der Ratsverfassung 1386-1986*, ed.

merchant community of a different confession it might still be valid, since it had a particular legal status.

In Novgorod, there was an enclave known as St Olaf's Yard, belonging to merchants from Gotland and dating, in its original form, from as early as the eleventh century.¹⁰ It later passed into the control of Hanseatic merchants. The original *Hansekontor* at Novgorod (St Peter's Yard) was presumably founded in the late twelfth century.¹¹ According to sixteenth-century records, it had an area of about 1960 m², more than a tenth of which comprised a graveyard.¹² The commercial agency was an autonomous institution, and the life of the merchants in the enclave was regulated by statutes.¹³ In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries it was mostly the towns of Visby and Lübeck that governed the agency; by the fifteenth century at the latest, actual control over it had passed to the Livonian towns.¹⁴ When at times no Hanseatic merchants were present in Novgorod, the Yard's keys were placed in the custody of the archbishop of Novgorod and the archimandrite of the Monastery of St George. However, this did not amount to Orthodox jurisdiction over the merchants' church. Originally the Catholic priest arrived along with the merchants on their seasonal commercial trips but later he was appointed by the Hanseatic towns, which gave rise to inter-urban competition in the nomination of such an important official. The enclave was fortified and carefully guarded; yet occasionally, when a great number of merchants arrived, those who could not find any room in it stayed in the houses of Novgorodians. Merchant apprentices who came with the purpose of learning the language also stayed in Russians' homes.¹⁵ As a landowner, the *Kontor* was involved in Novgorod's public utilities system;

Annette Boldt (Braunschweig, 1986), pp. 135–86 (here 139); Barbara E. Crawford, 'The Cult of Clement in Denmark', *Historie* 2 (2006), 235–82.

¹⁰ Anna L. Choroschkiewitsch, 'Nowgorodisch-warägische Beziehungen der ersten Hälfte des 11. Jahrhunderts nach Angaben von russischen Urkunden', in *Stadtwerdung und städtische Typologie des Ostseegebietes bis zur Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Julia-K. Bütke and Thomas Riis (Odense, 1999), pp. 26–33.

¹¹ See the bibliography in Ernst Schubert, 'Novgorod, Brügge, Bergen und London: Die Kontore der Hanse', *Concilium medii aevi* 5 (2002), 1–50.

¹² St Olaf's Yard also had a graveyard and a field (Lat. *prata*): *Hansisches Urkundenbuch*, ed. Konstantin Höhlbaum et al., 11 vols (Halle, 1876–1916), 1, no. 663, p. 233.

¹³ *Die Novgoroder Schra in sieben Fassungen vom XIII. bis XVII. Jahrhundert*, ed. Wolfgang Schlüter (Dorpat, 1914).

¹⁴ See Eckhard Groth, *Das Verhältnis der livländischen Städte zum Novgoroder Hansekontor im 14. Jahrhundert* (Hamburg, 1999); Nils Jörn, 'Die Emanzipationsbestrebungen der livländischen Städte in der Hanse in der zweiten Hälfte des 14. Jahrhunderts', in *Hansekaufleute in Brügge, 4: Beiträge der Internationalen Tagung in Brügge April 1996*, ed. Nils Jörn (Frankfurt am Main, 2000), pp. 249–82 (here 272–82).

¹⁵ Birte Schubert, 'Hansische Kaufleute im Novgoroder Handelskontor', in *Novgorod: Markt und Kontor der Hanse*, ed. Norbert Angermann and Klaus Friedland (Köln, 2002), pp. 79–95; Elena Rybina, 'Die hansischen Kaufleute in Novgorod. Ihre Lebensumstände

for example, it was obliged to participate in street paving works.¹⁶ In Smolensk, an enclave of Western merchants (St Mary's Church) is presumed to have existed from the twelfth century. During the thirteenth century, control over it passed to the town of Riga, but it was no longer in existence by 1399.¹⁷ A Hanseatic Church of St Nicholas in Ladoga on the River Volkhov is also known from 1268.¹⁸

The counterparts to the Catholic churches in Russia were the Orthodox churches in Scandinavia. According to a late tradition recorded in the seventeenth century, one such once stood in Sigtuna in central Sweden.¹⁹ We have more specific information about two Russian churches on Gotland. In 1461, the Livonian towns stated that the Russians had two churches on Gotland, in exchange for which the Gotlanders owned an enclave in Novgorod.²⁰ Sources mention property of Novgorodians on Gotland in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries,²¹ while Russo-Danish diplomatic correspondence from the 1560s contains a reference to an erstwhile Russian enclave in Visby.²² The precise location of these churches is unknown. They were probably situated in Visby, where the remains of a presumably Russian church have been archeologically investigated.²³ In the opinion of the

und ihre Beziehungen zu den Einwohnern der Stadt', in *Vergleichende Ansätze in der hansischen Geschichtsforschung*, ed. Rolf Hammel-Kiesow (Trier, 2002), pp. 237–45.

¹⁶ Anna L. Choroškevič, 'Russische Partner und Gegner der Hanse', in *Akteure und Gegner der Hanse – Zur Prosopographie der Hansezeit. Konrad-Fritze-Gedächtnisschrift*, ed. Detlef Kattinger and Horst Wernicke (Weimar, 1998), pp. 307–15; Elena A. Rybina, Торговля средневекового Новгорода. Историко-археологические очерки (Novgorod, 2001), pp. 150–52.

¹⁷ *Das rigische Schuldbuch (1286–1352)*, ed. Hermann Hildebrand (Sankt-Peterburg, 1872), pp. xxxvi–xxxvii; *Hansisches Urkundenbuch* 5, no. 364; Leopold Karl Goetz, *Deutsch-Russische Handelsverträge des Mittelalters* (Hamburg, 1916), p. 286; Смоленские грамоты XIII–XIV веков, ed. Ruben I. Avanesov (Moskva, 1963), pp. 20–62, A §32, B §32, C §32, D §29a, §35, p. 39, E §29a, p. 45, F §35; Nikolai N. Voronin and Pavel A. Rappoport, Зодчество Смоленска XII–XIII вв. (Leningrad, 1979), pp. 140–50.

¹⁸ *Hansisches Urkundenbuch*, 1, no. 663, pp. 231–32; Denis G. Khrustalev, 'К вопросу о существовании в XIII веке в Ладогe латинских церквей', in Ладoga и Глеб Лебедев, ed. Dmitrii A. Machinskii (Sankt-Peterburg, 2004), pp. 350–60.

¹⁹ Jonas Ros, *Sigtuna. Staden, kyrkorna och den kyrkliga organisationen* (Uppsala, 2001), pp. 170–76, 269.

²⁰ *Hanserecesse*, ed. Konstantin Höhlbaum et al., 26 vols in 4 series (Leipzig, 1888–1970), 2/5, no. 61.

²¹ Грамоты Великого Новгорода и Пскова, ed. Sigizmund N. Valk (Moskva, 1949), no. 29; *Hansisches Urkundenbuch*, 4, no. 397; Goetz, *Deutsch-Russische Handelsverträge*, pp. 81–82, 182.

²² Русские акты Копенгагенского государственного архива, ed. Yurii N. Shcherbachev (Sankt-Peterburg, 1897), nos 20–21, pp. 74, 88.

²³ See Gunnar Svahnström, 'Gotland zwischen Ost und West', in *Les pays du Nord et Byzance (Scandinavie et Byzance)*, ed. Rudolf Zeitler (Uppsala, 1981), pp. 441–67 (here 460–65).

Swedish historian Hugo Yrwing, these merchants' churches may have fallen into disuse in the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century, after which they would have quickly fallen into disrepair.²⁴ According to the scheme generally adopted in historiography, Russian merchants travelled westward, particularly to Gotland, as late as the thirteenth century. Later, however, their travelling activity declined, giving way to the mediating role of the Livonian towns, which eventually attempted to obstruct the Russians' commercial trips overseas as 'innovations'.²⁵

Russian Churches in Livonia

In medieval Livonia Russian merchants' churches certainly existed in Riga, Reval (mod. Tallinn, Estonia) and Dorpat. In the twentieth century various attempts were made to date the beginning of urban life in the eastern Baltic as far back as possible. To date, however, no firm evidence about pre-crusade urban settlements in Livonia has been found.²⁶ The Livonian towns were usually situated at the foot of a castle, and often a medieval stone castle was erected on the site of a pre-crusade hillfort. In these cases, the continuity of the settlement is indisputable, but the existence of permanent professional merchants' communities before the thirteenth century remains problematic.

Riga, the largest Livonian town, was founded in 1201 by the crusading bishop Albert von Buxhövdn. Two Livish villages have been excavated in the southern part of the later town and although a number of Russian artefacts have been discovered there, one cannot speak of Riga as a trade centre before the crusader conquest.²⁷ A Russian church in Riga is first mentioned in the early fourteenth century in connection with its demolition in the war between the town and the Teutonic Order

²⁴ Hugo Yrwing, *Visby – Hansestad på Gotland* (Stockholm, 1986), p. 386.

²⁵ See: *Die Novgoroder Schra*, p. 124, IIIb §5; p. 150, IV §89, V §92; Leopold Karl Goetz, *Deutsch-Russische Handelsgeschichte des Mittelalters* (Lübeck, 1922), pp. 221–23.

²⁶ Enn Tarvel, 'Genesis of the Livonian Town in the 13th Century', in *Prusy – Polska – Europa: Studia z dziejów średniowiecza i czasów wczesnonowożytnych*, ed. Andrzej Radzimiński and Janusz Tandecki (Toruń, 1999), pp. 287–301; Anton Pärn, 'Die Städtegründungen in Estland – Eine Analyse der Einflüsse auf die Siedlungsentwicklung', in *The European Frontier: Clashes and Compromises in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jörn Staecker (Lund, 2004), pp. 259–82; Andris Šnē, 'Emergence and Development of Early Urbanism in the Late Prehistoric Latvia', in *Riga und der Ostseeraum: Von der Gründung 1201 bis in die Frühe Neuzeit*, ed. Ilgvars Misāns and Horst Wernicke (Marburg, 2005), pp. 24–36.

²⁷ Andris Caune, 'Die Rolle Rigas im Dünamündungsgebiet während des 10.–12. Jahrhunderts', *ZfO* 41 (1992), 489–500; Caune, 'Archäologische Zeugnisse über die älteste Siedlung am Ort der heutigen Domkirche zu Riga', *ZfO* 42 (1993), 481–506.

in 1297.²⁸ We can assume that it was a stone structure.²⁹ The Orthodox Church of St Nicholas was surrounded by a Russian graveyard,³⁰ and this part of the town was known as the 'Russian village' (MLG *Russche dorp*). In 1425, a Rigan councillor made a donation to 'the Russian Convent and the local beguines' in his will.³¹ This institution, also called *cavent* or *elend* (convent, guesthouse or almshouse),³² was, in all likelihood, not connected with the Orthodox Church, but derived its name from its location in the Russian district.³³ The church and district may have been founded after the treaty between Riga and Polotsk in 1212.³⁴

In economic terms the Church of St Nicholas was subject to the control of the town council in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (earlier sources are missing), in a similar way to a Catholic town church. The churchwarden (MLG *vorstender*) was a member of the town council, i.e. a Catholic merchant. He guarded the inviolability of the church's property,³⁵ and consequently was responsible (at least partially) for the economic welfare of the church and its servants.³⁶ The Russian Church in Riga enjoyed a fixed income, which in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was derived from rents from the Church-owned houses.³⁷ Whether the

²⁸ *Das Zeugenverhör des Franciscus de Moliano (1312). Quellen zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens*, ed. August Seraphim (Königsberg, 1912), p. 134.

²⁹ Friedrich Benninghoven, *Rigas Entstehung und der frühhansische Kaufmann* (Hamburg, 1961), p. 42.

³⁰ Mentioned in the sources since the end of the fourteenth century: *Die Erbebücher der Stadt Riga 1384–1579*, ed. J.G. Leonhard Napiersky (Riga, 1888), p. 19, §140 and p. 123, §1067.

³¹ LUB 1/7, no. 372, p. 264: *in dat Russche covent 2 mrc. unde iislike beggynen 3 or. in de hand*. This is also the first piece of information about this convent.

³² For *cavent*, see *Die Erbebücher der Stadt Riga*, p. 90, §826, p. 183, §260–61; and for *elend* see p. 211, §440, p. 141, §13, p. 265, §758, p. 291, §898, p. 329, §1135, p. 291, §895, p. 357, §1291, p. 389, §1504, p. 294, §918.

³³ Leonid Arbusow, 'Livlands Geistlichkeit vom Ende des 12. bis ins 16. Jahrhundert', *Jahrbuch für Genealogie, Heraldik und Sphragistik* 1911–13 (1914), 1–430 (here 286).

³⁴ See Benninghoven, *Rigas Entstehung*, pp. 59–62; Andris Caune, 'Археологические свидетельства в реконструкциях планировок города Риги XII–XIII веков', in *Восточная Европа в средневековье. К 80-летию Валентина В. Седова*, ed. Nikolai A. Makarov et al. (Moskva, 2004), pp. 342–49; Caune, 'Русский двор в Риге XIII–XVI вв.', in *Новгородские археологические чтения*, ed. Valentin L. Yanin and Petr G. Gaidukov (Novgorod, 1994), p. 204–5.

³⁵ LUB 1/11, nos 399, 663, 687; *Russisch-livländische Urkunden*, ed. Karl E. Napiersky (Sankt-Peterburg, 1868), no. 374, p. 356; 'Jürgen Padel's und Caspar Padel's Tagebücher', ed. Heinrich J. Böthführ, *Mittheilungen aus der livländischen Geschichte* 13 (1886), 291–434 (here 328, 332); Полоцкие грамоты XIII – начала XVI вв., ed. Anna L. Khoroshkevich, 6 vols (Moskva, 1977–89), 2, nos 139, 181, 188, 191.

³⁶ LUB 1/10, no. 284; Полоцкие грамоты, 1, no. 76; 3, no. 292.

³⁷ Woldemar von Gutzeit, 'Die griechisch-katholischen Kirchen Riga's', *Mittheilungen aus dem Gebiete der Geschichte Liv-, Ehst- und Kurlands* 11 (1868), 277–417, 595 (here

town council had control over all the revenues of the church (including donations from visiting Russian merchants) or claimed them only occasionally under extraordinary circumstances remains unclear.³⁸ It was the Riga town council that requested the nomination of a new priest on the departure of an incumbent.³⁹ The Orthodox priest was nominated and the nomination was announced to the town council by the Orthodox bishop of Polotsk.⁴⁰

In the case of Reval, Paul Johansen believed that the Russian commercial factory was founded in the twelfth or even in the eleventh century.⁴¹ Many historians have accepted the hypothesis as a fact,⁴² although there is no written or archaeological source to support it.⁴³ The verifiable history of the permanent urban settlement in

385–86). See also *LUB* 2/1, no. 647, p. 478; *Russisch-livländische Urkunden*, no. 374, p. 355.

³⁸ *LUB* 1/10, no. 265; 1/11, nos 426, 687; Полоцкие грамоты, 1, no. 58; 2, nos 140, 181. Compare *LUB* 2/3, nos 454, 652; Полоцкие грамоты, 3, nos 293, 302; Woldemar von Gutzeit, 'Zur Geschichte der Kirchen Riga's', *Mittheilungen aus dem Gebiete der Geschichte Liv-, Ehst- und Kurlands* 10 (1865), 313–35 (here 329–30); Gutzeit, 'Die griechisch-katholischen Kirchen', pp. 386–87; Carl von Stern, *Der Vorwand zum großen Russenkriege 1558* (Riga, 1936), p. 13.

³⁹ Nina D. Bogolyubova and L.I. Taubenberg, 'О древнерусских памятниках XIII–XIV вв. Рижского городского архива', *Latvijas Valsts Universitāte. Zinātniskie raksti* 36 (1960), 7–22 (here 19); Полоцкие грамоты, 1, no. 14; Gutzeit, 'Die griechisch-katholischen Kirchen', p. 384.

⁴⁰ *LUB* 1/11, nos 299, 663, 800; 2/1, no. 647, p. 479; 2/3, nos 364, 454, 817, 857; Акты, относящиеся к истории Западной России, собранные и изданные Археографическою Коммиссиею, 5 vols (Sankt-Peterburg, 1846–1853), 2, no. 234, p. 403; Полоцкие грамоты, 1, no. 99; 2, no. 162; 3, no. 303. Also *LUB* 2/3, no. 595a; Arbusow, 'Livlands Geistlichkeit', pp. 94–95, 273. See also Vilho Niitemaa, *Der Binnenhandel in der Politik der livländischen Städte im Mittelalter* (Helsinki, 1952), p. 324.

⁴¹ Paul Johansen, *Nordische Mission, Revals Gründung und die Schwedensiedlung in Estland* (Stockholm, 1951), pp. 66–87.

⁴² See the overviews in Heinz von zur Mühlen, 'Revals Geschichte im Schrifttum der Nachkriegszeit', *ZfO* 38 (1989), 558–69; Anton Pärn, 'Die Städtegründungen in Estland', pp. 260–64.

⁴³ Jaan Tamm, 'Of the Older Settlement of Tallinn', *Castella Maris Baltici* 1 (1993), 205–11; Rasmus Kangroopool, 'All-linna topograafia 14. sajandil. Linnaehituslikust struktuurist Taani aja lõpul ja orduaja algul (1310–1365)', *Vana Tallinn* 14 (18) (2003), 11–49; Jaak Mäll and Erki Russow, 'Archäologie und Stalinismus. Die Anfänge der Stadtarchäologie in Estland und die Ausgrabungen auf dem Tallinner Rathausplatz', *Zeitschrift für Archäologie des Mittelalters* 31 (2003), 145–58; Enn Tarvel, 'Idrisi und Reval', in *Aus der Geschichte Alt-Livlands: Festschrift für Heinz von zur Mühlen zum 90. Geburtstag*, ed. Bernhart Jähnig and Klaus Militzer (Münster, 2004), pp. 1–9. No cultural layer from before the end of the thirteenth century has been investigated in this town region: Vladimir Sokolovski, 'Возникновение Таллина (к 50-летию археологических раскопок на Ратушной площади)', in *Псков в Российской и Европейской истории (к 1100-летию первого летописного упоминания)*, ed. Valentin V. Sedov, 2 vols (Moskva, 2003), 1:

Reval begins only with the Danish conquest in 1219, and its political situation remained quite unstable until 1238.⁴⁴ One can find evidence in the sources for the Russian Church of St Nicholas in Reval from 1371.⁴⁵ The church was adjoined by a graveyard.⁴⁶ Between 1397 and 1413, and perhaps around 1410, the Russian church was transferred to a new location about 200 metres to the south, for reasons which are uncertain.⁴⁷ It has been presumed that the transfer was attributable to the reinforcement of the town wall, and that the town council dispossessed the church of the old plot and replaced it with a new one.⁴⁸ The new church had no door opening directly onto the street;⁴⁹ neither did it have a stove in its side rooms, and the town council denied repeated requests by Russians to be allowed to have a stove built.⁵⁰ Under the same roof as the church was a house where goods were kept and Russian merchants visiting Reval convened for meetings.⁵¹ The house, which survived with changes until the construction of another new church building in 1820–27, was small but comprised both storage and church rooms. The church hall itself had a floor space of less than 80 m².⁵² According to fifteenth-century information the Russian church was owned by merchants from Novgorod.⁵³

244–53 (here 252). See also Jaak Mäll, ‘Arheoloogilise kultuurkihi spetsiifikast Tallinna vanalinna territooriumil’, in *Linnusest ja linnast: Uurimusi Vilma Trummali auks*, ed. Arvi Haak et al. (Tallinn, 2004), pp. 249–67.

⁴⁴ Tiina Kala, *Lübeck Law and Tallinn* (Tallinn, 1998), pp. 17–26.

⁴⁵ *Das zweitälteste Erbebuch der Stadt Reval (1360–1383)*, ed. Eugen von Nottbeck (Reval, 1890), p. 59, §417, p. 61, §431, p. 103, §700, p. 105, §707; *Die ältesten Kämmererbücher der Stadt Reval 1363–1374*, ed. Otto Greiffenhagen (Reval, 1927), p. 34 [24a].

⁴⁶ *Das drittälteste Erbebuch der Stadt Reval (1383–1458)*, ed. Eugen von Nottbeck (Reval, 1892), p. 265, §1146; Villu Kadakas and Hanno Nilov, ‘Various Investigations in Tallinn and Harjumaa’, *Archaeological Fieldwork in Estonia* for 2003 (2004), 160–75 (here 167–71).

⁴⁷ Stefan Hartmann, ‘Zwei Verzeichnisse Revaler Stadttürme um 1413–1426 und um 1513–1525’, *ZfO* 37 (1988), 187–214 (here 189, 201). For 1397, see *Das Revaler Pergament Rentenbuch 1382–1518*, ed. Artur Plaesterer (Reval, 1930), p. 83, §308. For 1413, see *Das drittälteste Erbebuch der Stadt Reval*, p. 137, §683.

⁴⁸ See Rein Zobel, *Tallinna keskaegsed kindlustused* (Tallinn, 1980), pp. 107–8.

⁴⁹ *LUB* 1/9, nos 155 and 274.

⁵⁰ *LUB* 2/1, no. 647 pp. 478–79 and no. 648, p. 483; *Hansisches Urkundenbuch*, 11, nos 525, 1054, III §8; *Hanserecesse*, 3/4, no. 44, §2.

⁵¹ *Hansisches Urkundenbuch*, 11, nos 525, 582; *Hanserecesse*, 2/4, no. 319.

⁵² Nikolai Tsvetkov, ‘Церковь святителя и чудотворца Николая Мирликийского в г. Ревеле’, in *Труды Московского предварительного комитета X археологического съезда в г. Риге*, ed. Praskovya Uvarova, 3 vols (Moskva, 1899–1900), 2: 169–81 (here 175–77); Igor Kleinenberg, ‘Tallinna Vene kaubahoovi ajaloo XV–XVI sajandil’, *Eesti NSV Teaduste Akadeemia Toimetised. Ühiskonnateadused* 11 (1962), 241–57 (here 248–49).

⁵³ *LUB* 1/9, no. 80; 1/12, no. 80, p. 38; *Hanserecesse*, 2/1, no. 586, §23/11.

It might be supposed that they brought a priest with them, although no records have survived relating to his ordination.⁵⁴ The priest and the servant (Russ. *dyak*) assigned to the church also participated in commercial transactions.⁵⁵ As is evident from the problems relating to the stove and the door, however, the Russian church was dependent on Reval town council.⁵⁶

An interesting case illustrating the relationship between the Russian Church and the Catholic clergy in Reval occurred in 1427, when the Dominican friars were in conflict with the diocesan and parochial clergy. The Dominicans claimed that during a procession before Ascension Day the cathedral canons, parochial priests and scholars of the cathedral school had passed by the Dominican church and stopped in front of the Russian church nearby, where they made worship, in order 'to insult the friars'.⁵⁷ This case demonstrates the diversity of the status of the Orthodox Church: in one sense, it was accepted as Christian; in another, it was used to shame the Dominicans and at the same time also called 'schismatic' in polemical writings to discredit the Catholic canons.

There is also some late information about a medieval Russian church in Kokenhusen.⁵⁸ Before the crusader conquest this place was controlled by a prince who was subject to Polotsk, and a Russian community lived there after the establishment of the German town in the thirteenth century.⁵⁹ Traders from

⁵⁴ See *Libri de diversis articulis 1333–1374*, ed. Paul Johansen (Tallinn, 1935), p. 20, §194 (*Rysse qui est cum pape*, 1340); Küllike Kaplinski, *Tallinna käsitöölised XIV sajandil*, 2 vols (Tallinn, 1980), 2: 9 (*H[err] Sergi[us]*, 1374).

⁵⁵ Eugen von Nottbeck, *Die alte Criminalchronik Revels* (Reval, 1884), pp. 51, 64; 'Русские акты ревельского городского архива', ed. Aleksandr Barsukov, in *Русская Историческая Библиотека* 15/1 (1894), nos 17, 27, 49, 54. See also Johansen, 'Die Kaufmannskirche im Ostseeggebiet', pp. 523–24; Kleinenberg, 'Tallinna Vene kaubahoovi ajaloost', pp. 249–51.

⁵⁶ In the seventeenth century the town council audited the Russian church's property: MS Tallinn, Tallinna Linnaarhiiv, f. 230 nim. 1 s. B.I. 22 fols 1–2v (audits in 1613, 1614, 1619). Compare 'Русские акты ревельского городского архива', no. 112.

⁵⁷ LUB 1/7, no. 355, §8 (dates from 1427), compare no. 326. For the background see Bernd-Ulrich Hergemöller, 'Der Revaler Kirchenstreit (1424–1428)', *Hansische Geschichtsblätter* 109 (1991), 13–41.

⁵⁸ *Polska XVI wieku pod względem geograficzno-statystycznym*, 13/1, ed. Jan Jakubowski and Józef Kordzikowski (Warszawa, 1915), pp. 71, 73; Angermann, 'Русские и белорусские купцы', p. 266. A possibly medieval Russian church is also indicated on late seventeenth-century maps of Wenden (mod. Cēsis, Latvia): Māra Caune, 'Cēsis Livonijas ordeņa laikā', *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls* 2 (1994), 110–18. There is a possibility, however, that a medieval Catholic church was used by the Orthodox during Muscovite or Polish-Lithuanian rule in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and became known as 'Russian'. See Norbert Angermann, *Studien zur Livlandpolitik Ivan Groznyjs* (Marburg, 1972), p. 60.

⁵⁹ Henry of Livonia, *Heinrichs Livländische Chronik*, ed. Leonid Arbusow and Albert Bauer, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptorum rerum Germanicarum in usum*

Kokenhusen with Russian names, and identified by descriptions such as ‘the priest’s brother’ and ‘the priest’s relative’, appear in the Debtors’ Book of Riga as early as in 1287.⁶⁰ It is not quite clear, however, whether the Russian priest in Riga or in Kokenhusen is meant here.⁶¹ If the priest had such local kinship ties, he might well be of local descent, rather than an incomer from, say, Polotsk, as was the case in later centuries. In medieval Russia a lay member of a community could become priest if his candidature was accepted by the bishop.

The Status of the Orthodox Churches in Dorpat

Dorpat was occupied by Russian princes around 1030–61 and later during the campaigns around 1134 and 1191. The hillfort there is mentioned as having been abandoned in 1211 after being burned by the Lettgallians.⁶² Despite the probable existence of a ‘Russian’ church here in the eleventh century, the newest archaeological investigations stress the discontinuity between the eleventh-century Russian settlement and the thirteenth-century medieval town.⁶³

Medieval Dorpat hosted two Orthodox churches: St George of the Novgorodians and St Nicholas of the Pskovians. They are mentioned for the first time in a Russian travel account from 1438: ‘they had two Orthodox churches, St. Nicholas and St. George, but few Orthodox people’.⁶⁴ As in Riga, there was a part of the town in Dorpat which was named after the Russians, where the probable remains of the

scholarum separatim editi, 31 (Hannover, 1955), ch. XXIX.5, p. 212; *LUB* 1/1, no. 454; Friedrich Benninghoven, ‘Ein Osnabrücker Fernhändlergeschlecht im Livlandhandel des 13. Jahrhunderts’, *Hamburger mittel- und ostdeutsche Forschungen* 4 (1963), 157–89 (here 169). Compare *LUB* 1/1, no. 55.

⁶⁰ *Das rigische Schuldbuch*, nos 19, 22, 1221, 1705. See also Benninghoven, *Rigas Entstehung*, p. 150.

⁶¹ Angermann, ‘Русские и белорусские купцы’, p. 266; Angermann, *Studien*, p. 61.

⁶² Henry of Livonia, ch. XV.7, p. 96.

⁶³ Andres Tvaauri, *Muinas-Tartu: Uurimus Tartu muinaslinnuse ja asula asustusloost* (Tartu, 2001), pp. 212–13, 250–54. See also Arvi Haak, ‘Archaeological Excavations in the Cathedral Ruins of Tartu’, *Archaeological Fieldwork in Estonia* 2001 (2002), 110–20 (here 112); Ain Mäesalu and Rünno Vissak, ‘On the Older Topography of Tartu’, in *The Medieval Town in the Baltic: Hanseatic History and Archaeology II. Proceedings of the Third and Fourth Seminar, Tartu, Estonia 12th–13th June 1999 and 8th–10th June 2000*, ed. Rünno Vissak and Ain Mäesalu (Tartu, 2002), pp. 145–63 (here 153–54).

⁶⁴ Церкви же христианские бы у них двъ: святыи Никола и святыи Георгий; христианъ же мало: *Acta slavica concilii Florentini narrationes et documenta*, ed. Joannes Krajcar (Roma, 1976), pp. 10–11; Paul von der Osten-Sacken, ‘Der Hansehandel mit Pleskau bis zur Mitte des 15. Jahrhunderts’, in *Beiträge zur russischen Geschichte. Theodor Schiemann zum 60. Geburtstage*, ed. Otto Höttsch (Berlin, 1907), pp. 27–82 (here 54–56).

Church of St George and its graveyard have been excavated.⁶⁵ In the area of the other Orthodox church possibly medieval inhumations have also been discovered. The two churches were probably founded in the thirteenth century; archaeological finds demonstrate the presence of Russian settlers near the Church of St George in the mid-1200s.⁶⁶

In the later Middle Ages, the houses of priest and *dyak* were situated close to the church;⁶⁷ the Novgorodian church also possessed a plot of land nearby. Dorpat town council, in response to the respective complaint lodged by the Novgorodians, promised that a certain building, which had been erected too close to (or against) the church, would be demolished so that everything would continue to be in accordance with established practice.⁶⁸ There are more allusions in sources to Russian churches in Dorpat. The references are harder to interpret, however, for they are associated with the political demands made against Livonia by the grand princes of Muscovy from the late fifteenth century, and are not necessarily an adequate reflection of the actual medieval status of the Russian churches. From 1463 or 1474 the contracts of truce between Dorpat and Pskov contained a clause obliging the Catholic bishop of Dorpat to pay a tribute to Pskov and guarantee the conformity of the status of the Russian churches and the town district with the old practice.⁶⁹ The bishop and the town council of Dorpat were to ‘clean the churches of St Nicholas and St George and the Russian town district, and to clean the villages of those churches [...] as of old’.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ Kaur Altoa, ‘Das Russische Ende im mittelalterlichen Dorpat (Tartu)’, *Steinbrücke. Estnische Historische Zeitschrift* 1 (1998), 31–42.

⁶⁶ Ain Mäesalu, ‘Archäologische Erkenntnisse zum Handel in Tartu (Dorpat) vom 12. bis zum 17. Jahrhundert’, in *Lübecker Kolloquium zur Stadtarchäologie im Hanseraum, II: Der Handel*, ed. Manfred Gläser (Lübeck, 1999), pp. 427–34 (here 432); Ain Mäesalu, ‘Die Haustypen im hansezeitlichen Tartu (Dorpat)’, in *Lübecker Kolloquium zur Stadtarchäologie im Hanseraum, III: Der Hausbau*, ed. Manfred Gläser (Lübeck, 2001), pp. 581–94; Andres Tvauri, ‘Pihkva pottsepad Viljandis ja Tartus 13. sajandil’, *Eesti Arheoloogia Ajakiri* 4 (2000), 21–30 (here 24–26); Tvauri, ‘Looode-Vene päritolu slaavi keraamika Eestis 11.–16. sajandil’, *Eesti Arheoloogia Ajakiri* 4 (2000), 91–119 (here 100–107).

⁶⁷ *LUB* 2/1, no. 647, p. 479.

⁶⁸ *to na gebuwet: Hanserecesse*, 2/4, no. 316, §8; no. 319.

⁶⁹ Псковские летописи, ed. Arsenii Nasonov, 2 vols (Moskva, 2000–03), 2, pp. 155–56; Natalya A. Kazakova, Русско-ливонские и русско-ганзейские отношения. Конец XIV–начало XVI в. (Leningrad, 1975), pp. 134–37, 140, 151; *Lietuvos metrika (1427–1506). Užrašymų knyga 5*, ed. Egidijus Banionis (Vilnius, 1993), no. 119.2, p. 215. See also Anti Selart, ‘Der “Dorpater Zins” und die Dorpat-Pleskauer Beziehungen im Mittelalter’, in *Aus der Geschichte Alt-Livlands*, pp. 11–37.

⁷⁰ *Lietuvos metrika (1427–1506)*, no. 119.1, p. 214: *церкви Божъей светого Николы и светого Гегоргея очыстити, и Руский конец и села тых церкви очыстити [...] по старыне*; Книга посольская метрики Великого княжества Литовского, ed. Mikhail Pogodin and Dmitrii Dubenskii, 2 vols (Moskva, 1843), 2, no. 70, pp. 163, 166 (1509), and pp. 161–62 (1521); Русские акты ревельского городского архива, no. 5. See

In April 1461 Novgorod complained that the Dorpat town council had taken away the gold and silver given to the Russian churches and never returned it, despite promises to do so.⁷¹ Some 'dispossessed church property' appears in the contracts in connection with the conflict between the Hanseatic League and Russia in the 1490s, although it is unknown what it referred to.⁷² The 'villages' of the churches may have emerged in the texts as a result of translation difficulties. A parallel use of the Russian expression *Russkii konets* ('Russian district') and the equivalent Low German *Rusche dorp* ('Russian village') may have been made in the negotiations, which in translation gave rise to the terms *Rusche ende* and the plural form [*Russkie*] *sela*, respectively.⁷³

The word *ochistiti* in Old Russian referred to cleaning in all respects, including a cultic sense, but also to release from duties or establishment of ownership. So the contracts actually refer to the release of Russian churches from some duties and/or from claims to ecclesiastical control.⁷⁴ In Novgorod, the Hanseatic enclave had to participate in street paving works; similar public utility duties might therefore have been required of the Russian enclaves in Dorpat. Considering the case of Riga, it is plausible, however, that the Dorpat town council, likewise, may have assumed some responsibilities for the maintenance of a church or churches. Thus Dorpat town council promised to repair the Church of St Nicholas in 1554-55, after it had fallen into disrepair following the Reformation, and also promised to rebuild the

also: Natalya A. Kazakova, 'Договор Пскова с Ливонией 1509. г.', *Вопросы Истории* 1 (1983), 90-98 (here 93, §16); 'Acta Hafniensia ad historiam Rossicam pertinentia', ed. Yurii N. Shcherbachev, in *Чтения в Императорском Обществе Истории и Древностей Российских при Московском университете* 4 (255) (1915), part 2, no. 20 pp. 28-29. The negotiations were held in (Old) Russian and the Low German contracts preserved were translations from Russian. See *LUB* 2/1, no. 647, p. 478; 2/2, nos 433, §72, 509, 510; 2/3, nos 583, §20, 584, §15, 775, §35; *Russisch-livländische Urkunden*, no. 307 p. 266, no. 369 pp. 337-8, 343, no. 377 pp. 364, 367, no. 380, p. 373, no. 331, p. 295; *Памятники дипломатических сношении Древней России с державами иностранными*, 10 vols (Sankt-Peterburg, 1851-71), 1, p. 81; Harald Cosack, 'Livland und Russland zur Zeit des Ordensmeisters Johann Freitag', *Hansische Geschichtsblätter* 28 (1923), 1-60 (here 6-7); Kazakova, *Русско-ливонские и русско-ганзейские отношения*, p. 164.

⁷¹ *LUB* 1/12, no. 80, p. 38.

⁷² Kazakova, *Русско-ливонские и русско-ганзейские отношения*, pp. 140-43, 288.

⁷³ Stern, *Der Vorwand*, pp. 14-18; Carl von Stern, 'Der Separatvertrag zwischen Pleskau und dem Stift Dorpat vom 25. März 1509', *Mitteilungen aus der baltischen Geschichte* 1/3 (1939), 23-43 (here 43); Kazakova, *Русско-ливонские и русско-ганзейские отношения*, p. 138.

⁷⁴ In the sixteenth century, however, the fifteenth-century treaties were interpreted by Musovians in the sense of vacating of houses in the Russian district: Selart, 'Der "Dorpater Zins"', p. 33.

priest's house.⁷⁵ It is true, however, that the town may have been forced into these actions under the threat of invasion by Muscovy. The only relationship between the permanent population of Dorpat and the local Russian churches appears to be the acts of iconoclasm committed at St Nicholas's Church in connection with the Reformation in Dorpat in 1525.⁷⁶ Nevertheless, one must bear in mind that all the medieval archives of Dorpat are lost and surviving information is scanty and random.

Local Community and Foreign Church

The existence of a church belonging to another confession was not unusual in frontier areas, but such cases have more to do with pragmatism than tolerance.⁷⁷ There are a number of examples from Eastern Europe. Several Greek Orthodox monasteries and churches existed in Hungary; they either adopted Catholic obedience in the eleventh or twelfth centuries or were converted by force in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.⁷⁸ From the fourteenth century in Vilnius there was a *civitas rutenica*, a Russian district with numerous Orthodox churches.⁷⁹ In late medieval Lemberg (mod. L'viv, Ukraine) Catholics, Orthodox, Armenians,

⁷⁵ Norbert Angermann, 'Zum Rußlandhandel von Dorpat/Tartu in der Zeit seiner höchsten Blüte (Mitte des 16. Jahrhunderts)', in *Die baltischen Länder und der Norden: Festschrift für Helmut Piirimäe zum 75. Geburtstag*, ed. Mati Laur and Enn Küng (Tartu, 2005), pp. 82–93 (here 85–86); Alftoa, 'Das Russische Ende', p. 36; *Monumenta Livoniae antiquae*, 5 vols (Riga, 1835–47), 5, no. 184, p. 510; Carl Schirren, *Quellen zur Geschichte des Untergangs livländischer Selbständigkeit*, 8 vols (Reval, 1861–81), 1, no. 28; Friedrich Bienemann, *Briefe und Urkunden zur Geschichte Livlands in den Jahren 1558–1562*, 5 vols (Riga, 1865–76), 1, nos 24, 71, 88.

⁷⁶ Tilmannus Bredenbachius, *Historia belli Livonici quod magnus Moscovitarum dux contra Livones gessit* (Antwerpen, 1564), p. 14v. The vita of the Orthodox priest Isidor, who according to a legend was martyred with his congregation by the Catholic authorities in Dorpat in 1472, has a later origin: Anti Selart, 'Der Dorpater Priester Märtyrer Isidor und die Geschichte Alt-Livlands im 15. Jahrhundert', *Ostkirchliche Studien* 48 (1999), 144–62.

⁷⁷ See Charles J. Halperin, 'The Ideology of Silence: Prejudice and Pragmatism on the Medieval Religious Frontier', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 26 (1984), 442–66; Rasa Mažeika, 'Of Cabbages and Knights: Trade and Trade Treaties with the Infidel on the Northern Frontier, 1200–1390', *Journal of Medieval History* 20 (1994), 63–76.

⁷⁸ Pál Engel, *The Realm of St. Stephen: A History of Medieval Hungary, 895–1526* (London, 2001), pp. 97–98. See also *Towns in Medieval Hungary*, ed. László Gerevich (Boulder, Col., 1990).

⁷⁹ Zigmantas Kiaupa, 'Die litauischen Städte im Spätmittelalter – zwischen eigener Herkunft und dem Einfluß ausländischer Nachbarn', in *Zwischen Lübeck und Novgorod: Wirtschaft, Politik und Kultur im Ostseeraum von frühen Mittelalter bis ins 20. Jahrhundert. Norbert Angermann zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Ortwin Pelc and Gertrud Pickhan (Lüneburg, 1996), pp. 167–77 (here 174–75).

Jews and Muslims had their own communities and holy places according to the privileges granted by the Polish king Kazimierz the Great (1333-70).⁸⁰ All these cases are different from that of Livonia, in that they were either places which had an Orthodox substratum, or they were in confessionally mixed areas. The Russian churches in Scandinavia and St Olaf and St Peter in Novgorod were founded at a time before the Schism of East and West became important in everyday life in northern Europe.⁸¹ The main problem in their establishment was not that of a foreign confession, but foreign rights of patronage, and the same could be said about the situation of the Latin churches mentioned in thirteenth-century Kiev.⁸² However, these churches and enclaves set precedents for further foundations. They became an object of commercial rather than ecclesiastical policy; when commercial practices changed, the German church in Smolensk and the Russian enclaves in Gotland were abandoned. In the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries the orthodox churches in Riga, Dorpat and Reval were simply a component of accepted commercial customs.

On what terms and how these commercial enclaves and merchants' churches in Livonia were founded is not actually documented in the sources. The status of the merchant and his property in a foreign land was determined by contracts concluded between the Russian towns and their rulers on the one hand and the Western merchants and/or Livonian rulers on the other, but surviving treaties speak about churches which were already in existence. To establish a commercial enclave and a church, a plot of land had to be obtained from the local prince or community on certain conditions.⁸³ Of a later origin was the Hanseatic commercial enclave in Polotsk, for which the town council of Riga issued a charter in 1393. By comparison, when the Hanseatic commercial enclave was established in Polotsk

⁸⁰ Christian Lübke, 'Ethnische Gemeinschaften und ihr Platz in der Topographie mittelalterlicher Städte des östlichen Europas', in *Mittelalterliche Häuser und Straßen in Mitteleuropa*, ed. Márta Font and Mária Sándor (Budapest, 2000), pp. 25–41 (here 25–26, 32); Leszek Belzyt, "'Sondergemeinden" in Städten Ostmitteleuropas im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert', in *Stadtgemeinden und Sonderbezirke in der Stadt der Vormoderne*, ed. Peter Johanek (Köln, 2004), pp. 165–72; *On the Frontier of Latin Europe: Integration and Segregation in Red Ruthenia, 1350–1600*, ed. Thomas Wünsch and Andrzej Janeczek (Warszawa, 2004). In the Livonian towns there was no Jewish settlement in medieval times.

⁸¹ See Vladimir Vodoff, 'Un pamphlet anti-latin à Novgorod au XVe siècle?', *Revue des études slaves* 70 (1998), 299–307.

⁸² Olha Kozubska-Andrusiv, 'The Dominicans in Thirteenth-Century Kievan Rus': History and Historiography', in *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU* 9 (2003), 203–23; Helmut Flachenecker, *Schottenklöster: Irische Benediktinerkonvente im hochmittelalterlichen Deutschland* (Paderborn, 1995), pp. 271–77.

⁸³ Johansen, 'Umriss und Aufgaben', p. 47.

in 1393,⁸⁴ Vytautas, the grand duke of Lithuania (1392–1430) rented a plot of land for building the church in 1406.⁸⁵

In Livonia the sources give no indication of any role of the territorial lord in the control of the foreign churches. The Russian churches were subject to the town magistrates, and one can suppose that they were founded only after the establishment of urban autonomy. Another important factor was whether there was a permanent local Orthodox population, as at Riga and Dorpat,⁸⁶ or not, as at Reval. The legal framework of a 'foreign' church was not a question of religious tolerance, but depended on commercial policy and urban self-government. On his point, however, we must remind ourselves that Albert Suerbeer, archbishop of Prussia, Livonia and Estonia (1245–73) and resident in Riga from 1253, was heavily involved in the policy of union between the Roman and Russian churches in the 1240s and 1250s. The Russians were treated as if they had already accepted the Roman obedience on some occasions during this time, and in such circumstances the establishment or legal constitution of the Russian church in Riga may perhaps have taken place on fairly favourable conditions.⁸⁷ Yet these churches were in all probability never consecrated by a bishop. There was no real need for this, since in Orthodox tradition the consecration of a church and altar by a bishop can be replaced by the use of an antimimension consecrated by a bishop, that is a piece of linen cloth possibly containing relics and kept on the altar. If the bishop had sent an antimimension, then a priest could consecrate the church.⁸⁸

In medieval German towns the right to appoint the priests of a parish church typically belonged to a lay lord, a bishop, cathedral chapter or monastery. In economic terms, churches were subject to town magistrates, and churchwardens

⁸⁴ *Hansisches Urkundenbuch*, 5, no. 125.

⁸⁵ *Hansisches Urkundenbuch*, 5, no. 702; Hermann Hildebrand, 'Das deutsche Kontor zu Polozk', *Baltische Monatsschrift* 22 (1873), 342–81. See also: Carl Schirren, *Neue Quellen zur Geschichte des Untergangs livländischer Selbständigkeit*, 3 vols (Reval, 1883–85), 1: 4–5; Anna L. Choroškevič, 'Der Handel Rigas mit Polock im 14./15. Jahrhundert', in *Fernhandel und Handelspolitik der baltischen Städte in der Hansezeit: Beiträge zur Erforschung mittelalterlicher und frühneuzeitlicher Handelsbeziehungen und -wege im europäischen Rahmen*, ed. Norbert Angermann and Paul Kaegbein (Lüneburg, 2001), pp. 137–55.

⁸⁶ See: *Hansisches Urkundenbuch*, 5, nos 905, 919; Полоцкие грамоты, 1, nos 41 and 42; 2, no. 146.

⁸⁷ *Vetera monumenta Poloniae et Lithuaniae gentiumque finitimarum historiam illustrantia*, ed. Augustinus Theiner, 4 vols (Roma, 1860–64), 1, no. 96; *Das Zeugenverhör*, pp. 27, 169, 200; *Documenta Pontificum Romanorum historiam Ucrainae illustrantia (1075–1953)*, ed. Athanasius G. Welykyj, 2 vols (Roma, 1953–54), 1, nos 12–18, 20–32; Anti Selart, *Livland und die Rus' im 13. Jahrhundert* (Köln, 2007), pp. 208–25.

⁸⁸ See Konstantin Nikolskii, *Об антиминсах православной русской церкви* (Sankt-Peterburg, 1872); Joseph Braun, *Der christliche Altar in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung*, 2 vols (München, 1924); *Hanserecense*, 3/4, no. 44, §2.

were members of the town council. Similar regulations were practices in Livonia.⁸⁹ In the case of the Orthodox church in Riga, the bishop of Polotsk appointed the Russian priest. The jurisdiction of the bishop of Polotsk is logical: the area that later became Riga was at least partly controlled by the prince of Polotsk at the turn of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; Polotsk was the nearest Orthodox bishopric and the nearest Russian town on the Dūna.

The legal framework regulating the status of non-permanent settlers in thirteenth-century Livonia was presumably relatively mild, because in 'German' urban commercial life the *frequentantes* (merchants from other towns) played an even more important role than the *manentes* (merchants who were permanently settled) at that time.⁹⁰ When the towns and their legal system were established in Livonia in the thirteenth century, there were also conditions for establishing Russian churches: there were existing precedents of foreign churches in Scandinavia and in Novgorod, and the local commercial practices needed such enclaves. There was no necessity to acquire any special privileges from a lord.

If we consider a possible continuity of Russian settlement or even churches from pre-crusade to post-crusade times, the only apparent example is that of Kokenhusen. Riga, Dorpat and Reval had no permanent commercial settlements before the German towns were founded. Yet even in Kokenhusen the 'town' of the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries was situated on the place of later *Vorburg* (i.e. in the castle area), while the medieval and early modern town (thirteenth to seventeenth centuries) was located at a new site in the vicinity.⁹¹ The precondition for the existence of a commercial enclave was regular, routine commerce, which seemingly only emerged in this area from the late twelfth century onwards.⁹²

⁸⁹ Leonid Arbusow, *Die Einführung der Reformation in Liv-, Est- und Kurland* (Aalen, 1964), pp. 44–48; Hartmut Boockmann, 'Bürgerkirchen im späteren Mittelalter', in Hartmut Boockmann, *Wege ins Mittelalter* (München, 2000), pp. 186–204; Arnd Reitemeier, *Pfarrkirchen in der Stadt des späten Mittelalters: Politik, Wirtschaft und Verwaltung* (Stuttgart, 2005).

⁹⁰ *Recueils de la Société Jean Bodin*, 10: *L'Etranger*, ed. François Ganshof, 2 vols (Bruxelles, 1958); Stuart Jenks, 'Zum hansischen Gästerecht', *Hansische Geschichtsblätter* 114 (1996), 3–60; Ernst Schubert, 'Der Fremde in den niedersächsischen Städten des Mittelalters', *Niedersächsisches Jahrbuch für Landesgeschichte* 69 (1997), 1–44; Horst Wernicke, 'Der Hansekaufmann als Gast in fremden Landen – Aufnahme und Verhalten', in *Fremdheit und Reisen im Mittelalter*, ed. Irene Erfen and Karl-Heinz Spieß (Stuttgart, 1997), pp. 177–92; Christian Lübke, *Fremde im östlichen Europa: Von Gesellschaften ohne Staat zu verstaatlichten Gesellschaften (9.–11. Jahrhundert)* (Köln, 2001).

⁹¹ Ieva Ose, 'Zeugnisse des mittelalterlichen Hausbaus in den Kleinstädten Lettlands', in *Lübecker Kolloquium zur Stadtarchäologie im Hanseraum III*, pp. 569–79 (here 571–78).

⁹² Ivar Leimus, 'Kaupmees', in *Eesti aastal 1200*, ed. Marika Mägi (Tallinn, 2003), pp. 43–68; Leimus, 'Wann und woher ist der deutsche Kaufmann nach Livland gekommen? Eine numismatische Studie', in *Delectat et docet: Festschrift zum 100jährigen Bestehen des Vereins der Münzenfreunde in Hamburg*, ed. Manfred Mehl (Hamburg, 2004), pp. 317–32.

Thus the Orthodox churches in medieval Livonia were primarily phenomena of commerce and secular urban life. They are another example of the pragmatic side of interconfessional relations in the frontier zone between the Catholic and Orthodox worlds in Eastern Europe in the later Middle Ages. The religious aspect in the establishment and existence of these churches was largely secondary. This explains how churches of schismatic Russians could be accepted by the Livonian crusading bishops and other authorities who frequently used the idea of dangerous heathen and schismatic neighbours in their political rhetoric.

PART V

Warfare on the Baltic Frontier

Chapter 14

Music and Cultural Conflict in the Christianization of Livonia, 1190–1290

Alan V. Murray

Introduction

The final two decades of the twelfth century saw the beginning of a Christian mission to one of the last pagan regions of medieval Europe: the land on the north-eastern shore of the Baltic Sea known as Livonia, corresponding to modern Estonia and Latvia. By around 1230 most of Livonia had been conquered and Christianized by the efforts of Western missionaries, crusaders and warrior monks belonging to the Roman Catholic (Latin) Church, although campaigns continued against the still pagan Lettish and Lithuanian tribes which surrounded it.

After initial attempts at peaceful conversion by the early German mission based at Üxkull (mod. Ikšķile, Latvia) under Bishops Meinhard and Berthold, the majority of the inhabitants of Livonia were brought into the Christian fold by a process that owed more to coercion than conviction. The forces of the new religion established themselves in newly built strongholds, and proceeded to impose Christianity on the natives by a process in which aggression was the prelude to baptism. Unless native communities were awed into accepting Christianity straight away – a relatively rare phenomenon – the main method of conversion was warfare of attrition, in which the communities were progressively weakened by the attenuation of their military capabilities, the elimination of political leaders and pagan priests, the seizure of livestock and captives, and the destruction of crops, beehives and other economic resources until they were obliged to sue for peace. Only then – and often only after hostages had been given – was baptism carried out. A network of parish priests was gradually established, but the extent and success of proselytization is difficult to establish. From the perspective of the ecclesiastical authorities, the main desiderata seem to have been acceptance of baptism, attendance at church services and the payment of tithes, rather than an exposition of the tenets of the faith. Many conversions were relatively shallow and backsliding was a common phenomenon, both with regard to the new faith and the new political structures, and native pagan beliefs and practices – especially among the Estonians and Semgallians – remained sufficiently strong to provide encouragement for numerous instances of group apostasy well into the fourteenth century, often in conjunction with revolts against the conquerors.¹

¹ Tiina Kala, 'The Incorporation of the Northern Baltic Lands into the Western Christian World', in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, ed. Alan V. Murray

The long era of warfare that drove the process of Christianization exemplified the clash between Western and indigenous cultures, in that it demonstrated the superiority of the organization and technology of the conquerors, who by the second half of the thirteenth century had secured their domination of Livonia despite being vastly outnumbered by their native opponents. The object of the following discussion is one of the less obvious aspects of this conflict, that is, the use of music by the Christian military orders and their crusader allies; although music was far less significant in the spread of Christianity than other factors, it is nevertheless important in demonstrating how elements of an alien culture were deployed against the indigenous peoples of Livonia in the propagation of the new faith.

We know relatively little of the music of the Baltic and Finnic peoples at the time of the crusader conquest, and the exiguous information available in the contemporary written sources must be supplemented by a combination of archaeological evidence and extrapolation from the written documentation of the early modern period. The most widespread instruments seem to have been those common to most northern European agricultural and pastoral societies, which were easy to produce, cheap in terms of materials and relatively durable: whistles, flutes, recorders and bagpipes.² The most distinctive form of instrumental music was probably produced by a stringed instrument known as *kannel* in modern Estonian and *kokles* in Latvian; these, which are members of the zither family, are generally grouped together with similar instruments known from Finland (Finn. *kantele*), Karelia and Lithuania under the designation 'Baltic psaltery'.³

From around 1180 onwards this range of vocal and instrumental musical activity, which was relatively unsophisticated in terms of its technological realizations, was confronted by a range of new musical forms and technology brought by the missionaries and crusaders from the West, which belonged to both religious and secular spheres. The most widespread form of new music in Livonia after the conquest was the vocal music of church services, which must have contrasted radically in style with the native traditions of folk song. In addition, the Westerners

(Aldershot, 2001), pp. 3–20; Marie-Luise Favreau-Lilie, 'Mission to the Heathen in Prussia and Livonia: The Attitudes of the Religious Military Orders toward Christianization', in *Christianizing Peoples and Converting Individuals*, ed. Guyda Armstrong and Ian Wood (Turnhout, 2000), pp. 147–54.

² Valdis Muktupāvels, 'Latviešu mūzikas instrumentas sistemātika' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Riga, 1999), pp. 21–30; Muktupāvels, 'Musical Instruments in the Baltic Region: Historiography and Traditions', *The World of Music* 44 (2002), 21–54. Recently a complete and well-preserved recorder was unearthed during archaeological excavations in the centre of Tartu in a latrine dated to the fourteenth century. See Andres Tvaari and Taavi-Mats Utt, 'Medieval Recorder from Tartu, Estonia', *Estonian Journal of Archaeology* 11 (2007), 141–54.

³ Stephen Reynolds, 'The Baltic Psaltery and Musical Instruments of Gods and Devils', *JBS* 14 (1983), 5–23.

brought with them a variety of hitherto unheard musical instruments which they deployed in both religious and military contexts.

Bells as an Expression of the New Faith

The most striking, audible and pervasive alien sound was that of the bells which adorned many of the newly built churches, the most visible manifestations of the new faith in the Baltic landscape. The clear sounds of the bells carried far beyond the boundaries of the towns and fortifications where the majority of the Christian newcomers lived, penetrating into countryside which might still be inhabited by pagans. They were thus a powerful sign of the reach of the Christian God and their regular sounds as they summoned congregations to church provided one of the ways in which the landscape was marked out as Christian.

While the majority of bells were used to summon believers to church services, there were also some which were used only to sound an alarm in the event of attacks by pagans. In the city of Riga there was a special bell, which was only rung in time of war, in order to alert the population to danger and assemble all able-bodied fighters. This 'great bell' (Lat. *campana magna*) or 'sweet-sounding bell of war' (*campana belli dulcisona*) is distinguished by Henry of Livonia from other bells, such as those of the Church of St Mary in Riga; it is therefore likely that it had a distinctive sound, presumably louder and deeper than the others, that enabled the citizens to immediately discern its warning function.⁴ When it was destroyed in a fire in 1215, the citizens greatly lamented its loss, but immediately set about casting a new, larger one. In a situation where Riga might be attacked from land or sea at any time, its people could not afford to be without such a warning system.⁵ Certainly by 1219/1220 the great bell was again in use, since it was rung after mass to assemble the visiting crusaders outside the city on the orders of Volkwin, master of the Sword Brethren.⁶

From the perspective of the pagans, bells had a quite different effect. Henry of Livonia reports how in the year 1210 Riga was suddenly attacked by hostile Curonians. Although the fighting forces inside the city were depleted, those able to fight were assembled by the sound of the war bell, and managed to beat off the first furious assault. The pagans returned to their ships to regroup. As they prepared for

⁴ Henry of Livonia, *Heinrichs Livländische Chronik*, ed. Leonid Arbusow and Albert Bauer, MGH *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usu scholarum*, 31 (Hannover, 1955), ch. XIV.5, p. 76, XVIII.6, pp. 119–20. English translations from the medieval sources quoted in this essay are by the author.

⁵ Henry of Livonia, ch. XVIII.6, p. 120.

⁶ *Livländische Reimchronik*, ed. Leo Meyer (Paderborn, 1876), lines 1008–14: *der gûte meister Volkewîn bat / die pilgerîme ubir al, / sô die den grôzen glocken schal / driestunt vernêmen, / daz sie zû velde quêmen / und unser vrouwen vanen war / nêmen. daz geschach vil gar.*

a fresh assault, the bell was again rung inside the city to call its defenders to stand to arms. Henry states that when the pagans 'heard the sound of the great bell, they said that they were being eaten and consumed by the God of the Christians'.⁷ It may well be that Henry's remarks on this episode are based on personal observation or on the testimony of a prisoner captured when the Curonians were put to flight after the arrival of a force of Christian Livs; in any case, it demonstrates that the pagans regarded bells as threatening, offensive manifestations of the foreign religion.

One can well understand why this perception should have taken root. Bells, which underwent ceremonies of blessing before being installed, had long been perceived by Christians as having an apotropaic function, in that they were believed to have the property of being able to ward off demons and evil spirits.⁸ On the Baltic frontier the Christian missionaries and knights often identified pagan deities with demons. In such a climate, where it might be feared that demons would fight in the ranks of their pagan enemies, the ringing of bells before battle by Christians could offer spiritual protection as well as the practical functions of raising the alarm or sounding assembly.⁹ The perspective of the pagans is perhaps less easy to establish, although it is notable that elsewhere in his chronicle Henry gives information that suggests that pagans believed that power could be gained by eating their enemies. He relates how, in 1223, Estonians from Saccala invaded Jerwia and seized the Danish advocate, Hebbus. They subjected him to cruel tortures, which they concluded by eating his heart, 'so that they would be made strong against the Christians'.¹⁰ His information on the reaction of the Curonians to the sound of the bells seems to be a reflex of such beliefs.

Some of the tribes among the Baltic and Finno-Ugrian peoples knew of bells before the arrival of the missionaries and crusaders in Livonia. The inhabitants of the Estonian islands and maritime districts and to a lesser extent, those of Curonia, had often mounted long-range seaborne raids against the coasts of Sweden and

⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIV.5, p. 76: *Et cum audirent sonitum campane magne, dicebant se ab illo Deo christianorum commedi atque consumi.*

⁸ Andreas Heinze, 'Die Bedeutung der Glocke im Licht des mittelalterlichen Ritus der Glockenweihe', in *Information, Kommunikation und Selbstdarstellung in mittelalterlichen Gemeinden*, ed. Alfred Haverkamp and Elisabeth Müller-Luckner (München, 1998), pp. 41–69.

⁹ This phenomenon can be observed in many of the new German placenames bestowed in Livonia and Prussia by the Christian conquerors. Thus castles with names such as Christburg and Marienburg (mod. Malbork, Poland) were obviously so called as a tangible mark of the new faith. However, alongside these we find names that include the element *Teufel*- ('devil'), as in the case of Teufelsberg. The most likely explanation for names on this pattern was that they were originally pagan cult sites, which were quite literally demonized by being renamed in the process of Christianization. See Reinhard Wenskus, 'Beobachtungen eines Historikers zum Verhältnis von Burgwall, Heiligtum und Siedlung im Gebiet der Prussen', in Wenskus, *Ausgewählte Aufsätze zum frühen und preußischen Mittelalter* (Sigmaringen, 1986), pp. 301–11.

¹⁰ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXVI.6, p. 190.

Denmark, and this practice continued into the crusade period. This can be illustrated by an incident which occurred when Albert of Buxhövden, the third missionary bishop of Livonia, was bringing a fleet with crusaders from his north German homeland to Riga. As the crusaders neared Danish-held territory in what is now southern Sweden, they encountered sixteen ships crewed by Estonians from the island of Ösel (mod. Saaremaa, Estonia).¹¹ The chronicler Henry relates that the Estonians had ‘recently burned down a church, devastated the land, having killed or taken prisoner its inhabitants, and carried off the bells and other possessions of the church, just as both the pagan Estonians and Curonians had been in the habit of doing in the kingdom of Denmark and in Sweden’.¹² Bells were of course valuable booty in a material sense; the bronze they contained was a high-quality metal, whose non-sparking qualities made it especially suitable for the manufacture of tools such as hammers, and of course it could also be melted down and used as a trading commodity. However, understood in conjunction with Henry’s remarks about the pagans identifying bells with the God of the Christians, there may also have been an element of pagan triumphalism in such actions in carrying off such prominent symbols of the enemy’s faith. If bells were melted down, the pagans could celebrate having silenced one of the most notable harbingers of the new, alien religion.

Music in Battle

These examples demonstrate how bells were used in liturgical and military, but primarily defensive contexts. However, the sources also show different instruments being employed in offensive military contexts. The most striking example of this occurs in an episode narrated by Henry of Livonia, who had been one of the protagonists in the events described. He tells how pagan Estonians from the provinces of Saccala and Ugaunia invaded Lettish territory that lay to the south. They besieged a castle known as Beverin, which was garrisoned by a force of Germans and Christianized Letts. During the fighting, a priest among the Christians, previously named as Henry and thus probably to be identified with the chronicler, took quite unusual action, which is worth describing in full:

¹¹ On naval warfare involving the Estonians, see Silvio Melani, ‘Guerra navale e anfibia sul Baltico nella cronaca duecentesca di Enrico di Lettonia’, *Itineraria* 2 (2003), 107–35.

¹² Henry of Livonia, ch. VII.1, p. 19: *Cum quibus prospera et adversa pro Deo pati non formidans fluctuanti pelago se committit et provinciam Listrie regni Dacie aggrediens paganos Estonos de Osilia insula cum sedecim navibus invenit, qui recenter ecclesia combusta, hominibus occisis et quibusdam captivatis terram vastaverant, campanas et res ecclesie asportaverant, sicut tam Estonos quam Curones pagani in regno Dacie et Suecie hactenus facere consueverant.*

Their priest, paying little heed to the attack of the Estonians, climbed up onto the ramparts of the castle and, while the others were fighting, sang out using a musical instrument in entreaty to God. But the barbarians, hearing the song and the sharp sound of the instrument, halted, because they had heard nothing like it in their own country, and ceasing to fight, they inquired about the cause of such rejoicing. The Letts replied that they were rejoicing and praising God because they had seen that He was defending them after their recent acceptance of baptism.¹³

The effect of this musical intervention was indeed remarkable. The Estonians seem to have been so disconcerted by it and the different effects it had on them and their Christian opponents, that they proposed a truce. However, the Letts, now sensing that they had the upper hand, refused to countenance the offer unless the Estonians agreed to perpetual peace and the acceptance of Christianity. The Estonians angrily refused, but they had evidently been so deflated by the whole episode that they abandoned the assault and retreated, suffering casualties as they were pursued by the reinvigorated Letts.

It would be illuminating to know what kind of musical instrument could have had such an amazing effect that it caused a besieging force to cease fighting in the tumult of battle, but unfortunately Henry does not specify it further. Clearly, if nothing like it had been heard before in the country, then it must have been a Western instrument of a type that had no resemblance to any of the native instruments, such as a pipe, recorder, flute, bagpipes or psaltery. It must have been loud enough to have been heard above the din of battle, and its sound is more precisely described as being *acutus*, that is 'sharp' or 'piercing'. In one of the earliest commentaries on Henry's chronicle, Eduard Pabst suggested that it was a mouth-blown instrument such as a trombone.¹⁴ However, Henry distinguishes between the song (Lat. *carmen*) of the priest and the sound of the instrument (*sonitus instrumenti*), which means that the priest was able to sing while playing at the same time. The instrument therefore could not have belonged to any mouth-blown type, which would thus exclude any horn, trumpet, trombone and the like. A different solution might be an instrument well established in the West by the early thirteenth century: the so-called portative organ, that is an organ which could be carried and played by one man. The organist used one hand to depress keys

¹³ Henry of Livonia, ch. XII.6, pp. 63–64: *Sacerdos eciam ipsorum, impugnationem Estonum modicum attendens, munitionem castris ascendit et aliis pugnantis ipse musico instrumento canebat Deum exorando. Sed barbari audientes carmen et sonitum instrumenti acutum substituerunt, quia in terra sua non audierant, et pausantes a bello causam tante leticie perquirebant. Lethi autem eo quod recepto nuper baptismo Deum se defendere viderent, ideo se gaudere ac Deum se laudare responderunt.*

¹⁴ *Heinrich's von Lettland Livländische Chronik*, trans. Eduard Pabst (Reval, 1867). I am grateful to Dr Valdis Muktupāvels (University of Riga) and to my colleague Dr William Flynn for their comments on the identification of the instrument played by the priest.

which produced a melody, while using the other hand to work an integral bellows. Nevertheless, it would be problematic and risky to climb onto the castle ramparts carrying something like this. The most ingenious solution has been proposed by the Latvian-born musicologist Joachim Braun, who has suggested that the priest may have played a *tromba marina*, an instrument known in German as a *Trumscheit*.¹⁵ This is a chordophone, having a playing string supported by a bridge set against a long wooden sounding board. It is played with a bow, and individual notes are made by lightly touching the string which, because of the way that the bridge is fixed, produces harmonics. It could thus easily have been used to produce a rudimentary accompaniment to a sung melody. The *tromba marina* could be built in different sizes, some of them evidently quite large; extant examples from the early modern period are up to two metres in length.¹⁶ Modern constructions of larger instruments produce a strident, rasping or buzzing tone, which would fit Henry's description of the instrument's sound as *acutus*. A rather similar effect could have been produced by a hurdy-gurdy (Ger. *Drehleier*), another chordophone whose sounds are produced by turning a wheel which rubs against strings; the melody is played by depressing keys which stop the melody strings, while sound against the constant bourdon tone is produced by unstopped drone strings. One argument in favour of the *tromba marina* as opposed to a hurdy-gurdy may well be the fact that Henry simply refers to an *instrumentum*. The hurdy-gurdy had long been known in the medieval West under the name *organistrum*, whereas the *tromba marina* was evidently less widespread. If we accept the proposition that Henry wrote his chronicle for the Curia as an account of the new church in Livonia, then his use of the term *instrumentum* may simply have been to communicate the role in a key incident of an instrument which he suspected might not be familiar to his readers. The key point about this entire episode, however, is that it shows us the quite remarkable effects of a previously unknown instrument and musical performance on the Estonians.

While the priest's intervention during the siege of Beverin was evidently a case of inspired improvisation, we can find other evidence of music being employed in battle in a more systematic manner. Scholarship has pointed to several factors that were crucial in the superiority of the Christian conquerors: the high quality of their armour, the deployment of crossbows, warhorses and siege machinery, the discipline of the Western knights, and the construction of fortifications in stone and brick.¹⁷ The role of music in Christian military technology and tactics has so far been little heeded.

¹⁵ Joachim Braun, *Music in Latvia* (Riga, 2002), p. 96.

¹⁶ Cecil Adkins, *A Trumpet by Any Other Name: A History of the Trumpet Marine* (Buren, 1991).

¹⁷ Friedrich Benninghoven, 'Zur Technik spätmittelalterlicher Feldzüge im Ostbaltikum', *ZfO* 19 (1970), 631–51; William Urban, 'The Organization of the Defense of the Livonian Frontier in the Thirteenth Century', *Speculum* 48 (1973), 525–32; Sven Ekdahl, 'Das Pferd und seine Rolle im Kriegswesen des Deutschen Ordens', in *Das*

We need to distinguish several different groups and institutions among the agents of military conquest. Firstly, there were crusaders from northern Germany and Denmark, campaigning for limited periods to obtain spiritual and material benefits before returning to their homes. Secondly, the military monastic orders, initially the Order of the Sword Brethren, up to 1237, and thereafter the Livonian branch of the Teutonic Order which absorbed the remnants of the Sword Brethren after a major military defeat. A third group consisted of settlers of German and Danish origin; these included some secular knights, but the majority were burgesses of urban foundations such as Riga. Fourthly, Christianized native tribes fought as auxiliaries alongside Germans and Danes. These were initially recruited from Livs and Letts, but later included numbers of Estonians. They served predominantly on foot, using spears, swords and shields, or riding on native mounts which were smaller and lighter than the heavy warhorses of the German and Danish knights. An additional possibility is that the Europeans may have employed mercenaries. This was fairly common in the later Middle Ages in both Livonia and Prussia, although the subject has hardly been discussed for the conquest period, mainly because the evidence is so sketchy.¹⁸

Most studies have quite understandably laid a great emphasis on the military superiority of the German and Danish knights, who had heavier and better-quality armour and horses than their native opponents, which enabled them to fearlessly mount devastating charges. The warrior monks of the Sword Brethren and the Teutonic Order, as well as the secular crusaders and settler knights, were usually in the forefront of any combat, whether on horseback or on foot, both fighting and directing operations. They undoubtedly had a high religious motivation, which was buttressed by prayers and exhortations before battle.¹⁹ However, the numbers of knights available to the crusading institutions were relatively small: the order of the Sword Brethren never had more than 120 knight brethren.²⁰ Their successors in the Teutonic Order had greater numbers of knights, but these were distributed

Kriegswesen der Ritterorden im Mittelalter, ed. Zenon Hubert Nowak (Toruń, 1991), pp. 25–47; Ekdahl, 'Horses and Crossbows: Two Important Warfare Advantages of the Teutonic Order in Prussia', in *The Military Orders 2: Welfare and Warfare*, ed. Helen Nicholson (Aldershot, 1998), pp. 119–51; Evalds Mugurēvics, 'Die militärische Tätigkeit des Schwertbrüderordens (1201–1236)', in *Das Kriegswesen der Ritterorden im Mittelalter*, pp. 125–32; Andrzej Nowakowski, 'Some Remarks about Weapons Stored in the Arsenal of the Teutonic Order's Castles in Prussia by the End of the 14th and Early 15th Centuries', in *Das Kriegswesen der Ritterorden im Mittelalter*, pp. 75–88.

¹⁸ Marian Biskup, 'Das Problem der Söldner in den Streitkräften des Deutschordensstaates Preußen von Ende des 14. Jahrhunderts bis 1525', in *Das Kriegswesen der Ritterorden im Mittelalter*, pp. 49–74; Juhan Kreem, 'The Business of War: Mercenary Market and Organisation in Reval in the Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Centuries', *Scandinavian Economic History Review* 49 (2001), 27–42.

¹⁹ *Livländische Reimchronik*, lines 1802–19, 3287–98, 4787–4834.

²⁰ Friedrich Benninghoven, *Der Orden der Schwertbrüder: Fratres Milicie Christi de Livonia* (Köln, 1965), pp. 406–8.

around different garrisons and difficult to concentrate quickly. Despite their small numbers, their undoubted courage and over-confidence often prompted the orders to take on far superior forces, resulting in heavy casualties, as happened at Lake Peipus in 1242.²¹ Often the terrain was unfavourable, and in marshy or broken country the knights found it difficult to manoeuvre and even to stay in formation. This seems to have been the cause of the defeat of the Sword Brethren and German crusaders during the Semgallian campaign of 1236, when an attempt to protect a fighting retreat turned into a rout at Saule, leading to the death of the master and about half of the knight brethren of the Order.

Numerically the biggest contingents of troops on the Christian side were the native allies, who were normally used in secondary roles: scouting, protecting flanks and pursuing broken enemy formations to prevent them regrouping. However, they were not particularly reliable. In situations which seemed unfavourable, they tended to flee. This occurred repeatedly, for example at the battles of Ümera (1210), Schoden (1259) and Durben (1260), leaving the German knights to fight and be defeated. This meant that a key role was played by disciplined foot soldiers, recruited from volunteer crusaders and from the burgesses of Riga and other settlements; these may have been supplemented by mercenaries.

The most frequent instruments to be employed in Western warfare from the Merovingian period up to the end of the twelfth century were trumpets, bugles and horns. They were used to communicate a variety of fixed commands, such as to mount horses, to join up in formation, to advance and so on. They could also be used to sound the alarm, or to reveal one's position to allied formations.²² We can see this type of signal in one of the most famous literary examples, that is the *Chanson de Roland*, when Roland sounded his horn at Rencesvals. Horns and trumpets had the advantage that their sound could carry over far greater distances than the human voice, but the relatively small range of notes available must have limited the number of commands that they could be used to communicate. In particular cases, they could signal more complex manoeuvres which had been prearranged, but these would necessarily have been restricted in number. Horns and trumpets seem to have been used primarily by cavalry forces, which of course, had become the dominant component in Western armies by the central Middle Ages. In this context we find a 'war-horn' (MHG *herhorn*) being used to give signals to the forces raised by the Sword Brethren and the Teutonic Order to sound assembly, advance or attack.²³ In these instances at least a rudimentary range of signals was available. Even if the tones could not be greatly varied, the evidence of the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* shows that commands could be communicated

²¹ *Livländische Reimchronik*, lines 2225–61.

²² J.F. Verbruggen, *The Art of Warfare During the Middle Ages from the Eighth Century to 1340*, 2nd rev. edn (Woodbridge, 1997), pp. 84–89.

²³ *Livländische Reimchronik*, lines 3357–58: *man hórte drístunt den clanc, / der ûz dem herhorne dranc: / dô was daz her vil wol bereit*; 4284–91.

by a different number of blasts. In the case of an invasion of Semgallia which took place around 1250, we find the Christians reacting to a series of commands:

The Master ordered the war-horn to be blown, which had been determined as a signal. The noise was great and mighty, and the army made ready straight away. Then the war-horn sounded again, clearly, and the army began to form up. When the third signal was blown, Master Andreas of Livonia rode off like a bold warrior, along with the entire army.²⁴

This use of a series of blasts on a horn or trumpet to assemble an army in formation seems to have been a fairly general procedure in most Western armies and we should not be surprised that it constituted a significant factor in the discipline of crusader forces in the Baltic region. In his fundamental study of Western warfare in the Middle Ages, Verbruggen observes how it is difficult to be precise about the use of such instruments; they were so commonplace that the sources rarely describe their exact use.²⁵ However, the *Rhymed Chronicle* gives several examples of how such instruments were used, often in the cases of speeches placed in the mouths of commanders before battle, an indication of how important this use of signals was to Christian tactics in the Baltic region. It would appear that the commands were not fixed absolutely, as in most modern armies, but varied according to context. In some cases, the meaning of the signal must have been prearranged, as in the case of a campaign in Samogitia, when it was used to regroup the different units which had dispersed to plunder enemy territory:

The army was laden with booty, having devastated the entire country, when Master Anno said: 'Now pay attention, everyone: when the war-horn is sounded, that is the signal to break off and return home. Our hands are full, and we have taken plunder of huge value'. The horn was blown and the army made ready to return. Everyone was elated that the campaign had gone so well.²⁶

²⁴ *Livländische Reimchronik*, lines 3303–15: *der meister sân gebiten hiez, / blâsen an daz herhorn, / das zû dem zeichen was erkorn. / des galm was michel under grôz. / daz her sich al zû hant entslôz / und breite sich vil snelle. / man hôrte aber eines helle / daz herhorn erklingen: / daz her begunde ûf dringen. / dô daz dritte zeichen wart / geblâsen, sich hûb ûf die vart / der gûte meister Andrês dô / von Nieflant als ein degen vrô, / mit im daz her gemeine.*

²⁵ Verbruggen, *The Art of Warfare*, pp. 84–85.

²⁶ *Livländische Reimchronik*, lines 4281–95: *daz her hatte vol die hant / und verterbete gar daz lant. / dô sprach meister Anne: / 'nû prîvet alle, wanne / daz herhorn geblâsen wirt, / sô bezale wir den wirt / und rîten hin zû lande. / wir haben vol die hande. / waz wir haben hie gehert / daz ist mâzen vil gewert.' / daz horn zû hant geblâsen wart. / dô bereite sich ûf die vart daz her algliche / und was vreuden rîche, / daz ez im wol was ergân.*

Similarly, a prearranged signal could be used to summon reinforcements if a force was threatened.²⁷

By contrast with this classic cavalry instrument, one striking feature to emerge from the chronicle of Henry of Livonia is how music was employed by the infantry – as opposed to the cavalry – components of Christian forces on the Baltic frontier. In 1224 an invasion was made into the country of Ugaunia by the bishop of Riga and the Sword Brethren, who laid siege to the Estonian castle at Dorpat (mod. Tartu, Estonia). We are told that throughout the night the native auxiliaries beat their shields with their swords, while the German footsoldiers played on their instruments.²⁸ The immediate point of this action was to deprive the garrison of sleep, but it was also meant to intimidate the pagan Estonians; and we can find similar cases in which the Sword Brethren were in the habit of clashing their swords on their shields while advancing on the enemy.²⁹ The crusaders' opponents responded to this musical barrage by playing music of their own, but this was provided not by the Estonians, but by their Christian Russian allies.

In this and other examples, the key musical component seems to have been the use of drums (*tympani*) and pipes or fifes (*fistulae*). The Latin word *fistula* is a generic term for a pipe. Here it is likely to have been a form of transverse flute, or more probably, a fife, that is a smaller cylindrical, bored mouth-blown instrument, with a relatively high pitch.³⁰ The fife became relatively common in military usage in the later Middle Ages, especially in Swiss armies, which were almost wholly made up of infantry.³¹ Both fifes and drums could be used to communicate prearranged signals on the battlefield by varying the drumbeat or the melody of the fifes; the beat of drums could also regulate the speed of advance, which was a crucial factor in maintaining order in the face of the enemy. It might be thought that the sound of the fifes would be drowned out by the drums and other din of battle. However, if we look at modern contexts where the combination of drums with fifes or flutes (or latterly, derivative forms of the fife such as piccolos) survives as part of a popular musical tradition, such as Northern Ireland or Basel in Switzerland, we can observe that the shrill, high-pitched notes of the fifes can be

²⁷ *Livländische Reimchronik*, lines 7451–58: *kûmet der Semegallen her / ûf ûch, sô setzet ûch zû wer / und blâset sân mîn horn, / daz zû dem zeichen ist erkorn, / so kome ich mit mînen roten.*

²⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXVIII.5, p. 203: *Nulla requies conceditur fessis, diebus pugnant, noctibus ludos et clamores exercent. Lyvones cum Lettis concussionem gladiatorum cum clypeis conclamantes, Theutonici in tympanis et fistulis et ceteris instrumentis musicis, Rutheni cum suis instrumentis et clamoribus noctes omnes insomnes ducunt.*

²⁹ *Livländische Reimchronik*, line 1133.

³⁰ *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 2001), s.v. 'Fife'; Achim Diehr, *Literatur und Musik im Mittelalter* (München, 2004), pp. 51–51.

³¹ Several illustrations of the fife and drum combination in medieval Swiss armies can be seen in Carl Pfaff, *Die Welt der Schweizer Bilderchroniken* (Schwyz, 1991).

heard even when accompanied by similar or greater numbers of drums.³² For the remainder of the Middle Ages this combination seems to have been an essential characteristic of Christian armies in the Baltic region.³³ Thus, from the fifteenth century we have evidence of letters of the Livonian Master of the Teutonic Order asking the town of Reval (mod. Tallinn, Estonia) to provide him with musicians (MLG *pipere und ... trommitter*) who had previous military experience.³⁴ By the early modern period the combination of fifes and drums had become a typical form of military music used by infantry forces throughout Europe. This did not change significantly until the introduction of more exotic instruments during the Napoleonic Wars, and eventually brass instruments (such as bugles) in the course of the nineteenth century.

It is clear that in the context of a siege, infantry had a prominent part to play. However, we can find an example of the fifes and drums of the German infantry figuring on the open field of battle in an offensive context. In 1211 a force of Sword Brethren and crusaders made an attack against the Estonians which involved marching through the night. The Christian forces advanced in two separate columns, the infantry being sent ahead by the main road while the knights followed along a route to their right. Henry of Livonia goes on to describe the ensuing conflict:

And the foot-soldiers proceeded cautiously and in an orderly manner; descending from the hills they saw the camp and the forces of the pagans, and a valley between them. Straight away they joyfully beat their drums and enlivened the spirits of their men with their musical instruments and their singing; calling on God's mercy on them, they moved quickly towards the pagans, and after crossing a stream they paused to order themselves.³⁵

³² On these modern musical traditions, see Gary Hastings, *With Fife and Drum: Music, Memories and Customs of an Irish Tradition* (Belfast, 2003) and Georg Duthaler, *Trommeln und Pfeifen in Basel* (Basel, 1985).

³³ Henry's description of an invasion of Livonia in 1218 by Vsevolod Mstislavich, grand prince of Novgorod, indicates that the Russians also had drums and fifes, which they played while regrouping after a withdrawal (*percusserunt tympanum et fistulas suos*), although it is unclear whether they had adopted these in imitation of German practice. Henry of Livonia, ch. XXII.3, p. 223.

³⁴ LUB 1/10, no. 26; Juhan Kreem, *The Town and Its Lord: Reval and the Teutonic Order (in the Fifteenth Century)* (Tallinn, 2002), p. 81.

³⁵ Henry of Livonia, ch. XV.3, p. 90: *Et ibant pedites caute et ordinate et mane facto descendentes de monte vident castrum et exercitum paganorum, et vallis erat inter eos. Et statim percusso tympano leticie cum instrumentis musicis et cantu suo virorum animos exhilarantes Deique clemenciam super se invocantes festinanter ad paganos accelerant et transito rivulo ad colligendum se in unum modicum subsistunt.*

The Estonians were terrified by this prospect, Henry adds, but they succeeded in forming up and proceeded to give battle. We have to pause to remind ourselves that here we have a case of Christian infantry opening a battle by advancing on an unbroken enemy in open country, while their knights were held back in support, joining battle only after the infantry was committed – this at the beginning of the thirteenth century, when the heavily armoured mounted knight was still considered to be the dominant component in Christian military forces. In the second case, a clear indication of motivation is shown by the singing (Lat. *cantus*) of the Christians as they advanced, and such singing is described on other occasions as raising Christian spirits.³⁶ It would be illuminating to know whether the songs were secular, or – as would be more likely in a crusading context – religious in character. Clearly the crusader infantry were both well motivated and well disciplined, and these examples indicate that both instrumental and vocal music was a significant factor in these qualities.

Conclusions

The chronicle of Henry of Livonia provides some of the earliest evidence for the drum and fife combination, and further research might show whether it was the use of motivated and disciplined infantry forces in the Baltic region in an age dominated elsewhere by mounted knights that initiated and stimulated this particular form of military music. At least in the first years of the conquest, these sounds would seem to have unnerved and even terrified the enemy, while giving comfort to those for whom their music was familiar. However, music was not simply an adjunct to warfare. Rather, diverse manifestations of music, from the bells of the Christian church to the fifes, drums and singing of the crusader military forces, were employed themselves as artefacts of conflict in the great religious and cultural confrontation on the final great medieval frontier between paganism and Christianity.

³⁶ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXII.3, p. 150.

Chapter 15

Crossbows or Catapults? The Identification of Siege Weaponry and Techniques in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia

Stephen Turnbull

Introduction

The *Chronicon Livoniae* of Henry of Livonia is the most important primary source for the history of the early stages of the Livonian Crusade, the operation to convert pagan Livonia that began late in the twelfth century.¹ Henry compiled his narrative between 1224 and 1227, and completed it within a very short time of the actual occurrence of the events he describes. His text is full of lively descriptions of numerous military actions, accounts that are particularly valuable to the military historian because Henry was an eyewitness to many of the scenes he describes.

One essential element in the advance of the Livonian Crusade and the protection of the new converts from pagan tribesmen was the construction of fortified places. As a result, many of the battles between the German crusaders and their enemies involved sieges of, and attacks on stone or timber castles. These are actions that Henry describes in valuable detail, but the actual techniques and weaponry employed in the operations are often very difficult to interpret. It is the purpose of this chapter to identify the siege weaponry and techniques noted in this very important narrative in order to add to our understanding of early thirteenth-century siegecraft.² In particular, this discussion will attempt to add

¹ The edition of Henry's chronicle used in this chapter is Henry of Livonia, *Heinrichs Livländische Chronik*, ed. Leonid Arbusow and Albert Bauer, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi*, 31 (Hannover, 1955). English translations are taken from *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia: Henricus Lettus*, trans. James A. Brundage, 2nd edn (New York, 2003).

² See Randall Rogers, *Latin Siege Warfare in the Twelfth Century* (Oxford, 1992); Kelly DeVries, *Medieval Military Technology* (Peterborough, Ont., 1992); Christopher Marshall, *Warfare in the Latin East* (Cambridge, 1992); *The Medieval City Under Siege*, ed. Ivy A. Corfis and Michael Wolfe (Woodbridge, 1995); R.C. Smail, *Crusading Warfare 1097–1193*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, 1995); John France, *Western Warfare in the Age of the Crusades, 1000–1300* (London, 1999).

to the conclusions drawn by Paul Chevedden in his detailed examination of the survival of ancient siege weaponry into the Middle Ages.³

We do not have to read very far into Henry's account to encounter the first mention of an attack on a fortified building. In 1184 Meinhard of Segeberg, the pioneer missionary to Livonia, built a church in the village of Üxküll (mod. Ikšķile, Latvia) to serve the needs of the handful of converts he had made. Meinhard's new flock was highly vulnerable to attacks from pagan tribesmen, whose hostility Meinhard experienced for himself when a Lithuanian raid was mounted that winter. The assault forced him to flee to the forests along with the local people, and gave him much food for thought:

When the Lithuanians had withdrawn, Meinhard accused the Livonians of foolishness, because they had no fortifications. He promised them that castles would be built if they decided to become and to be considered as sons of God. This pleased them and they promised and confirmed by an oath that they would receive baptism.⁴

Meinhard kept his side of the bargain, and stonemasons were brought over from Gotland the next summer. The result was Livonia's first castle, and in fact that country's first stone building of any sort. However, when the castle of Üxküll was finished the Livs' gratitude faded. Many of those who had been baptized now relapsed, while others refused to accept the faith. Undaunted, Meinhard battled on with his mission, and at least had the satisfaction of seeing his gift of a castle prove its worth when it resisted an attack by pagan tribesmen from Semgallia in what is now southern Latvia.⁵

Meinhard died in 1196 and was replaced in the Livonian diocese by Berthold, the Cistercian abbot of Loccum, who accepted the dangerous appointment under protest. His misgivings were well founded, because several attempts were made on his life. Berthold soon realized that such a volatile missionary field required military protection, so he returned secretly to Saxony and came back to Livonia with a crusading army. On 24 July 1198 the first battle took place between native Livs and the German crusaders who had come to enforce the conversions. Bishop Berthold was one of the few on the German side to lose his life in a Christian victory won partly because the crusaders had heavy cavalry that brushed aside the lighter ponies of the Livs.

³ Paul E. Chevedden, 'Artillery in Late Antiquity: Prelude to the Middle Ages', in *The Medieval City Under Siege*, pp. 131–73.

⁴ Henry of Livonia, ch. I.5, p. 3: *Recedentibus Letthonibus causatur iam dictus Meynardus Lyvonum stulticiam, eo quod municiones nullas habeant. Quibus castra fieri pollicetur, si filii Dei censei et esse decreverint. Placet et promittitur et, ut baptismum recipiant, iuramento firmatur* (trans. Brundage, p. 26).

⁵ Henry of Livonia, ch. I.6, p. 3.

Bishop Berthold was succeeded in his frontier diocese by one of the most remarkable characters in Baltic history: Albert von Buxhövdén, a man who appears to have had a keen eye for military strategy. Albert believed that Üxküll castle was located too far up the river Düna (mod. Daugava/Zapadnaya Dvina) to be really effective, so he founded another castle nearer the sea at the point where a small stream joined the Düna to form a natural harbour. That was the beginning of the city of Riga. Bishop Albert also realized that the defence of the Livonian mission would greatly benefit from the presence of a standing army based in Livonia rather than the short-term supply of visiting crusaders. To achieve this he founded a military order of his own: the Brothers of the Militia of Christ, otherwise known as the Sword Brethren from the insignia of a cross and a sword granted to them by Pope Innocent III.⁶

The Use and Defence of Castles in the Livonian Mission

As the boundaries of the mission expanded, a line of castles and forts was established to support the operation, although the selection of places where they were sited was not entirely due to any military genius on the part of the Sword Brethren. In many cases they simply took over existing native sites that had long been appreciated for their defensive value by the peoples that the crusaders conquered. The building of Lennewarden (mod. Leilvarde, Latvia) in 1205, for example, was begun on top of the smouldering ruins of a Livish fortress on the northern banks of the Düna. The use of a barrier of water to provide a line of defence was a feature to be found in many sites, so these castles were often located upon a promontory at the confluence of two rivers. One pre-crusader hillfort on the Düna, Daugmale, has recently been excavated to reveal an extensive complex consisting of a wooden castle with an adjacent early town, a harbour and two burial places.⁷ In many cases the construction of wooden castles was adopted by the Germans as an immediate measure for securing conquered areas before stone castles could be built. Timber also provided a ready means of establishing a temporary strongpoint while out on campaign. These foundations sometimes became permanent bases.

In the winter of 1206 a victory over raiding Lithuanians served to illustrate the value of the newly established castle line. The Sword Brethren and their local allies assembled at Lennewarden. The Lithuanian army challenged their enemies to battle. The crusaders responded and defeated the Lithuanians, after which they pursued them for a whole day, liberating some captives as they did so. It was a model campaign, which indicated the strategy that should be adopted to counter any further raids from across the Düna. Albert knew that he had little chance of intercepting a raiding party as it entered Livonia, but at least he could send out

⁶ Henry of Livonia, ch. VI.4, p. 18.

⁷ The reconstruction on display in the National Museum in Riga is the source for this observation.

timely warnings to the communities who were most likely to be affected. The key to successful communications lay with the chain of castles. Local militia could gather at the castle nearest to the likely return route. They could then pursue and fall on the heavy-laden Lithuanian raiders.

Local leaders who were sympathetic to the crusaders operated out of their own timber forts in support of the German knights. An excellent example is the chief known as Caupo, who ruled the Livs along the Livonian Aa (mod. Gauja, Latvia) north of Riga. His headquarters was on the banks of the Aa at Treiden (mod. Turaida, Latvia). The castle was a most impressive timber structure built either in the second half of the eleventh century or at the latest at the turn of the twelfth century. The timber fortress extended to the very edge of the plateau. It had defensive banks almost six metres wide, and the fortifications included a wall of horizontal logs. Vertical support was supplied by massive tree trunks buried securely in the ground, around which a framework of interlocking timbers was raised. Careful cutting near the ends produced a neat and solid joint rather like the traditional log cabin of the American West. The towers were roofed over with shingles above projecting beams. It was later replaced by the Order's stone castle, which covered a smaller area.⁸

The stone castles that replaced the timber fortresses were not elaborate affairs. Thick upright stone walls protected by ditches formed the main defences. There were few provisions for flanking fire, and the stone was always augmented by timber. We may therefore envisage the earliest castles as being simple stone blockhouses in the form of a single tower with an adjoining wall, or even just a walled enclosure with integral buildings. Kirchholm (mod. Salaspils, Latvia) on the Dūna provides an early example of a simple walled area. It was the second castle to be associated with Bishop Meinhard, and dates from about 1186. Excavations have revealed a design of an almost perfect square of stone walls with a tower at one corner. It was protected on three sides by a ditch, and on the fourth by the waters of the Dūna. Kirchholm also provides the first example of a tower being incorporated into the wall.⁹

Wherever possible the Order's castles were built no further apart than the distance that their patrols could watch effectively. The castles around the heartland of Livonia were built quite close together, while the further from the settlements one went the more widely separated the castles became. From the core zone between Dūnamunde (mod. Daugavgrīva, Latvia) and Ūxküll there were four castles within a space of just over 48 km. Lennewarden was 19 km upstream of Ūxküll. Ascheraden (mod. Aizkraukle, Latvia) lay 34 km further on and Kokenhusen (mod. Koknese, Latvia) was another 29 km distant. From that point distances increased greatly. Gerzike (mod. Jersika, Latvia) was 80 km away,

⁸ For a photograph of a model of the original castle on display in the museum at Turaida castle, see Stephen Turnbull, *Crusader Castles of the Teutonic Knights 2: The Stone Castles of Latvia and Estonia* (Oxford, 2004), p. 62.

⁹ Turnbull, *Crusader Castles*, p. 5.

and Dünaburg (in mod. Daugavpils district, Latvia) lay another 70 km upstream. Finally, lonely Wolkenburg (mod. Makonkalns, Latvia) lay isolated 99 km into the interior on the shore of Lake Razna in Lettgallia.

Several sections in Henry of Livonia's chronicle are concerned with the attacking and defending of the castles held by both sides in the conflict. When the Sword Brethren took the fight to the pagans' own timber castles the technique they used tended to begin with a ravaging of the area around, killing the inhabitants, and then the use of archery to clear the enemy from the outer ring of defences while the moat was filled in. An assault, often using fire against the vulnerable wooden defences, would follow.

Similar techniques may be noted when the crusaders' own castles came under attack, but their own fortifications, even the wooden ones, tended to be more substantially built than those of their enemies. Pagan raids on the crusader castles usually followed a tactical pattern of using surprise, seizing women and children from the villages as slaves and escaping as soon as possible with their booty. No castle garrison ever managed to block these rapid and sudden attacks, but as the raiders sought loot rather than battle, an actual assault on the castle itself was a rare event. From the crusaders' point of view their castles acted primarily as military bases from where the Sword Brethren could mount patrols against such raids and then launch counter-offensives of their own. The castles also became part of a longer-term strategy whereby the interior was opened up to convert or conquer the tribes and be protected by the construction of fortified places.

When it came to individual defence, the Livonian castles provided a challenge to an attacker from the moment he approached. A succession of walls and ditches surrounded the final entrance to a castle, which was itself constructed so that an attacker could be observed at every stage. In addition to the walls and towers themselves, the garrison would be armed with and skilled at using various anti-personnel weapons. The process of attack involved similar hand-held weapons and a wide range of siege machines, a topic to which we now turn.

Siege Weapons in the *Chronicon Livoniae*

As noted earlier, Henry's chronicle provides some of the most vivid surviving descriptions of early thirteenth-century siege warfare. Before examining the passages that are difficult to interpret, we may note that some descriptions are unambiguous and reveal the employment of several machines and techniques recorded elsewhere during the same period. For example, at Odenpäh (mod. Otepää, Estonia) in 1217 the Russians threw the corpses of captives into the water supply of the castle in order to pollute it.¹⁰ The Russian advance against Riga in 1206 was halted when they came upon the ground strewn with caltrops (Lat.

¹⁰ Henry of Livonia, ch. XX.7, p. 139.

ferreis claviculus tridentibus).¹¹ Caltrops were simple iron spikes arranged in the shape of a tetrahedron so that one spike was always pointing upwards. They were also used to defend Dünamunde in 1210.¹² The use of a *propugnaculum* (siege tower) is frequently mentioned.¹³ It took eight days to construct one from large, tall trees.¹⁴ At Doblen (mod. Dobeles, Latvia) in 1212 one siege tower was blown over in the wind.¹⁵ We also hear of the besieging Sword Brethren digging at the ramparts; sometimes this was carried out under the protection of some form of cover, referred to in Henry's chronicle as *ericeii* (hedgehogs).¹⁶

Problems of identification occur only in the case of Henry's description of missile weapons, which are introduced to the reader in his account of the first military operation against any castle in Livonia. This was the attack on Meinhard's foundation of Üxküll in 1185:

At that time the Semgalls, pagans of the neighbourhood, hearing of the building made of stones, and not knowing that the stones were held together with cement, came with large ship's ropes, foolishly believing they could pull the fort into the Dvina.¹⁷

The failure of this crude attempt to pull the walls down is explained because while they were tugging against the solidly built walls 'they were wounded by the ballistarii instead and went away having suffered losses'.¹⁸

This is the first of many mentions in the chronicle of *balistarii* (rendered by Brundage by the word 'ballistarii' in his English translation), who may be defined quite simply as men who operate *balistae*. But what is the *balista* in the Livonian context? Brundage, in a footnote, identifies it as a 'large wheeled crossbow, which was sometimes provided with a pouch and a double string and could thus be used for throwing stones'.¹⁹ This is a description of a torsion weapon dating from antiquity, once thought to have died out in the early Middle Ages. Two short bow

¹¹ Henry of Livonia, ch. X.12, p. 42.

¹² Henry of Livonia, ch. XIV.5, p. 76.

¹³ For example, Henry of Livonia, ch. XIV.8, p. 78, XIV.11, p. 84, XXVIII.5, p. 203.

¹⁴ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXVIII.5, p. 203.

¹⁵ Henry of Livonia, ch. XVI.4, p. 108.

¹⁶ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIII.8, p. 162.

¹⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. I.6, p. 3: *Eo tempore Semigalli, pagani vicini, audita lapidum constructione, ignorantes eos cemento mediante firmari, cum magnis funibus navium venientes, putabant se stulta sua opinione castrum in Dunam trahere* (trans. Brundage, p. 27).

¹⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. I.6, p. 3: *sed a balistariis vulnerati dampna reportantes abierunt* (trans. Brundage, p. 27).

¹⁹ *Chronicle*, trans. Brundage, p. 27, note. This is an interpretation shared by Eric Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades: The Baltic and the Catholic Frontier, 1100–1525*, 2nd edn (London, 1997), p. 91.

arms were drawn back against the tension of skeins wound round two spindles. It was a powerful machine, but took time to operate.²⁰ Although this identification is not an unreasonable conclusion to draw from the use of the word *balistarii* in the passage describing the Üxküll action, the identification must be called into question because of the way that the term is used elsewhere in Henry's narrative. From other sections we learn that the *balistarii* are highly mobile troops, not the operators of normally static siege machinery. For example, in the attack on Kirchholm in 1206 'ballistarii mounted the ramparts and wounded many'.²¹ At Riga in 1210 'the Livonians and ballistarii ran forward to meet them at the first fortifications'.²² At Treiden in 1211 'The ballistarii, who had been sent from Riga to guard the fort together with the Livonians, went out to meet them in the field'.²³ On the island of Moon (mod. Muhu, Estonia) in 1227 'the ballistarii and the strong armed men climbed upon the tower'.²⁴

It is also clear from other sections in the text that the role of the machines operated by the *balistarii* is not that of throwing stones, but rather of loosing arrows. Stone throwing is carried out by other siege implements which are identified in the text as 'paterells' (*patherelli*),²⁵ or simply called 'machines' (*machine*) as in the expression *patherellos videlicet et machinam magnam*.²⁶ These weapons, which will be discussed below, are clearly differentiated from the weapons operated by the *balistarii* during Henry's account of the attack on Treiden in 1206. The attackers 'set fire to the walls of the fort, and with the paterells threw fire and stones into the fort, the ballistarii wounded a great many on the fortifications'.²⁷ At Riga in 1210 casualties are noted as being caused either by the machines or by the *balistarii*:

When they came out from under their shields in order to bring up wood for burning the fort, many of them were wounded by arrows (*sagittariis*) and when any of their men fell, wounded by the stones of the machines (*machinarum*) or

²⁰ See Randall Rogers, *Latin Siege Warfare in the Twelfth Century* (Oxford, 1992), p. 261; Jean Liebel, *Springalds and Great Crossbows* (Leeds, 1998).

²¹ Henry of Livonia, ch. X.12, p. 41: *balistarii munitionem ascendentes plurimos vulneraverunt* (trans. Brundage, pp. 62–63).

²² Henry of Livonia, ch. XIV.5, p. 76: *Et Lyvones ac balistarii occurrentes eis ad primam munitionem, que erat in campo ante portam civitatis* (trans. Brundage, pp. 97–98).

²³ Henry of Livonia, ch. XV.3, p. 89: *Et occurrunt eis balistarii in campum* (trans. Brundage, p. 110).

²⁴ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXX.4, p. 218: *Tunc amoto porco turrim ligneam fortem ponunt in loco, super quam ascendunt armati fortes et balistarii* (trans. Brundage, p. 241).

²⁵ For example, Henry of Livonia, ch. X.9, p. 39.

²⁶ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXX.5, p. 220.

²⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. X.9, p. 39: *patherellis ignem et lapides in castrum proiciunt, balistarii quam plures in munitione vulnerant* (trans. Brundage, p. 60).

by the ballistarii, immediately his brother or some other companion killed him by cutting off his head.²⁸

At Lehhowa (mod. Lõhaver, Estonia) in 1214, 'Everyone blessed the Lord, Who had miraculously delivered the fort into their hands without the use of ballistas or machines' (*absque balistarum sive machinarum*).²⁹

The distinction between the two sorts of missile weapons is made most clearly in Henry's account of the operation against Waldia on the island of Ösel (mod. Saaremaa, Estonia) in 1227: the people of Waldia could not withstand the stone missiles, because of the multitude of people who were in the fort. Likewise, they could not bear up under the missiles of the *balistarii*.³⁰ The *balistarii* therefore are mobile troops who discharge arrows from their weapons, but Henry also distinguishes them from archers (*balistariis et aliis sagittariis*).³¹ He gives us a further important clue as to what the *balistarii* really were using when he writes: 'The Russians, however, were ignorant of the art of the ballista, being familiar, rather, with the bow.'³² This particular contrast suggests that the *balistarii* were actually crossbowmen operating hand-held weapons.

This conclusion is supported by the work of Rogers, who states that the term *balista* was sometimes used generically to refer to any form of projectile weapon. It does not necessarily only refer to large torsion machines.³³ Chevedden also illustrates how the term *balistarii* changed from having a meaning in antiquity of artillerymen to being used in the Middle Ages to denote crossbowmen.³⁴ A translation of *balistarii* as crossbowmen also fits with what we know from other sources about warfare in the eastern Baltic region. According to Sven Ekdahl, the crossbow was the 'everyday weapon' of the military orders who fought in Livonia, and appears in the statutes of the Teutonic Order, who eventually absorbed the Sword Brethren: *monores balistas aptas pedibus ad trahendum et arcus pro*

²⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIV.5, p. 77: *Et cum exirent de tabulis suis ad comportationem lignorum ad incendium, plurimi ex eis a sagittariis ledebantur. Et quicumque eorum a lapidibus machinarum aut a balistariis vulneraus cecidit, statim frater suus aut alius consocius suus absciso capite eum totaliter interfecit* (trans. Brundage, p. 98).

²⁹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XVIII.7, p. 121: *Et benedixerunt omnes Dominum, qui mirabiliter tradidit castrum in manus eorum absque balistarum sive machinarum impugnationibus, et pervenit nomen Christi eciam usque ad alias provincias* (trans. Brundage, p. 140).

³⁰ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXX.5, p. 220.

³¹ Henry of Livonia, ch. X.8, p. 38.

³² Henry of Livonia, ch. X.12, p. 41: *Rutheni quoque, qui artem balistariam ignorant, arcuum consuetudinem habentes* (trans. Brundage, p. 63).

³³ Rogers, *Latin Siege Warfare*, p. 264.

³⁴ Chevedden, 'Artillery in Late Antiquity', p. 145.

fratibus.³⁵ The use of crossbows also appears in the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* (Ger. *Livländische Reimchronik*), which dates from the late thirteenth century. One example reads as follows:

zû hant der meister gebôt,
daz man die gûten schutzen
solde dâ benutzen.
die schutzen rische nâmen
ir armbruste und quâmen
vor den hagen mit grimme.³⁶

Another detailed passage illustrates how pagans who acquired crossbows required instruction in their use:

dâ was ein schalc, der hiez Bertolt,
dem wâren die Semegallen holt,
wen er was ein schutze;
er wart in sint vil nutze.
deme kiezen sie daz leben,
ob er sich wolde zû in geben.
er tet daz und was vrô.
die Semegallen vunden dô
in einer kurtzen wîle
armbruste unde pfile
in dem vorburge gnûc.
vil snelle man sie zû samne trûc.
sie wâren der armbruste vrô.
der bôse cristen der name dô,
sô manchen schutzen er ûz las,
als vil der armbruste was.
wer dar zû nicht kunde,
lêren er den begunde
spannen und schiezen.³⁷

³⁵ Sven Ekdahl, 'Horses and Crossbows: Two Important Warfare Advantages of the Teutonic Order in Prussia', in *The Military Orders, 2: Welfare and Warfare*, ed. Helen Nicholson (Aldershot, 1998), pp. 119–51 (here 137): 'for the brothers smaller crossbows for drawing with the feet or bows'.

³⁶ *Livländische Reimchronik*, ed. Leo Mayer (Paderborn, 1876), lines 6220–25; *The Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*, ed. and trans. Jerry C. Smith and William L. Urban, 2nd edn (Chicago, 1977), p. 64: 'Then the master gave orders for the good archers to be brought up. The archers took up their crossbows and grimly advanced on the fort.'

³⁷ *Livländische Reimchronik*, lines 8631–49; *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*, p. 87: 'There was a knave there called Berthold, and the Semgallians spared him because he was

Stone-Throwing Machines

So if the *balista* in Henry's terminology is a crossbow, what are the paterells and the machines? They could have been the same elusive torsion weapons used, as they were in antiquity, for stone throwing, but one particular account by Henry would appear to rule this out. At Kirchholm in 1206 'the Russians also made a little machine like that of the Germans, but not knowing the art of throwing rocks, they hurled them backwards and wounded many of their own men'.³⁸ Because torsion-operated rock throwers were like giant crossbows they could not be fired backwards, so Henry is almost certainly describing a form of lever-operated artillery or traction trebuchet, where the motive power is provided by a team of men pulling simultaneously on a number of ropes. These devices, which originated in China, were tricky to operate, hence the Russians' problems, and Rogers in fact relates the story of an artilleryman who was killed by a rock spinning backwards from his weapon.³⁹ To prevent this happening, a crucial role was played by a man who held on to the projectile in its sling until the last moment, a technique clearly demonstrated in medieval manuscripts.⁴⁰ One medieval illustration shows what happened if one did not let go at the right time, because the unfortunate operator is being pulled into the air along with the projectile.⁴¹

Such stone throwers were well used in Livonia. At Treiden in 1212, 'the Germans destroyed the ramparts of the fort and killed many men and beasts with the many large rocks which they shot into the fort with their paterells'.⁴² In the attack on Ösel's 'new fort' in 1222 we read:

an archer. He later proved to be of great use to them. They offered him his life if he would join them, and this he gladly did. The Semgallians soon found plenty of crossbows and arrows in the outer works of the castle. This pleased them greatly and they quickly gathered them all together. The evil Christian selected and assembled as many men to be archers as there were crossbows and gave instruction to whosoever did not know how to draw and fire.'

³⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. X.12, p. 42: *Fecerunt eciam Rutheni machinam parvam more Theutonicorum; sed nescientes artem lapides iactandi plures ex suis post tergum iactantes leserunt* (trans. Brundage, p. 63).

³⁹ Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China*, 3: *Chemistry and Chemical Technology; Part VI: Military Technology: Missiles and Sieges* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 203–18; Rogers, *Latin Siege Warfare*, p. 273.

⁴⁰ An excellent example can be seen in the Maciejowski Bible (MS New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, 638), fol. 23v, illustrated in Rogers's book on p. 269. The vital need for this form of control was demonstrated to me when I watched the operation of a reproduction traction trebuchet at Caerphilly Castle in August 2000. In this case the holder of the projectile in its sling sat on the ground to give the necessary tension before release.

⁴¹ This is also illustrated in Rogers's book on p. 271 and is from Peter of Eboli, *Liber ad honorem Augusti* (Bern, Burgerbibliothek, 120 II).

⁴² Henry of Livonia, ch. XVI.4, p. 108: (trans. Brundage, p. 127).

Some of the Oeselians went into Warbole to study the use of the paterell or the machine which the Danes had given to the people of Warbole as their subjects. They returned to Oesel and began to build paterells and machines. They taught others and each of them made his own machine. All of them came together with seventeen paterells, they shot many great stones continually for five days.⁴³

Stone-throwing devices also appear in the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*, where they are used to project large stones.⁴⁴ According to Henry's account the paterells could also be used for throwing fire as well as stones. At Dorpat (mod. Tartu, Estonia) in 1224 they 'wounded many men atop the fort with the missiles of the machines (*iactibus machinarum*), and with the paterells they shot glowing iron or pots of fire (*patherellis ferrum ignitum vel ollas igneas*) into the fort'.⁴⁵ Henry's chronicle also implies that the German crusaders made use of larger stone-throwing machines that were capable of delivering a bigger payload. At Mesoten (mod. Mežotne, Latvia) in 1220 extensive preparations were made for the attack:

bringing with them a great machine and other smaller ones, together with still other instruments for besieging the fort [...] Some of them built a tower, others put up the paterells, others used the ballistas, others built hedgehogs and began to dig at the ramparts below. Still others carried up wood, filled the moat with it, and pushed the tower across it, while others began to dig beneath its shelter.⁴⁶

The decisive weapon, however, proved to be the 'great machine':

At last the larger machine was put up and great rocks were cast at the fort. The men in the fort, seeing the size of the rocks, conceived a great terror. The duke took charge of the machine, shot the first stone, and crushed the enemy's balcony and the men in it. He shot a second one and dislodged the planks and the logs of the rampart. He discharged a third one and pierced and shattered three large logs in the rampart and struck some men. After seeing this, the people fled from

⁴³ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXVI.3, p. 188: *Et quidam ex eis abierunt in Warbolam, considerantes artem patherelli sive machine, quam Dani Warbolensibus, tamquam subditis suis, donaverant. Et reversi in Osiliam ceperunt edificare patherellos et machinas et docebant alios. Et fecerunt unusquisque ex eis suas machinas. Et venerunt simul omnes cum decem et septem patherellis, iactantes lapides multos et magnos diebus quinque continue* (trans. Brundage, pp. 206–7).

⁴⁴ *Livländische Reimchronik*, lines 8229–30; *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*, p. 83.

⁴⁵ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXVIII.5, p. 203 (trans. Brundage, p. 224).

⁴⁶ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIII.8, p. 162: *ducentes secum macinam magnam et alias minores ceteraque instrumenta ad castra impugnationem [...] Quorum alii propugnaculum edificant, alii paterellos erigunt, alii balistas exercent, alii edificant ericios, de subtus fodere vallum incipiunt, alii lignorum compartationibus fossatum implent, et propugnaculum desuper impellitur, sub quo ab aliis foditur* (trans. Brundage, p. 180).

the rampart and sought safer places. But since they had no refuge, they asked for quarter so that they could come down and make their plea to the bishop.⁴⁷

As this machine delivered such large and destructive missiles it may well have been a counterweight trebuchet, a device that is known to have been used in this period.⁴⁸ This is the more familiar version of lever artillery, whereby the motive power was provided not by a team of men pulling ropes, with the inevitable variation that arose from the human factors of tiredness or lack of co-ordination, but from a counterweighted bucket filled with rocks or earth. The identification is strengthened by the description above of one man, the duke himself, 'shooting it'. Only one man was needed to do this, because all the heavy lifting and resetting had already been carried out. Counterweight trebuchets could throw heavier weights with more consistency, but were much more cumbersome and took a long time to erect, hence the expression used by Henry of Livonia: 'at last the larger machine was put up'.

In conclusion, it can be said that the lively accounts of siege warfare in Henry's chronicle, which may seem very confusing when the technology is not understood, acquire added value when the various machines and techniques have been identified. For example, several of the devices mentioned above appear in Henry's description of the siege of Fellin (mod. Viljandi, Estonia) in 1211. Fellin was the stronghold of the Estonians of Saccala, and a fierce attack was launched that went very much against the crusaders. The Estonians killed and captured several of the attackers and seized their armour and helmets. These they subsequently wore up on the ramparts for the besiegers to see. One advantage the crusaders and their allies seem to have had was in their archery, and the crossbowmen drove the garrison back sufficiently to allow their comrades a respite to build a moveable siege tower:

The Livonians and Letts carried wood and filled the moat up from bottom to top, and pushed the tower over it. The Letts and the ballistarii went up on the tower, killed many men on the battlements with arrows and spears, wounded many, and for five days a great battle raged. The Estonians strove to burn down the first pile of wood by casting a great deal of fire from the fort on to the carts. The Livonians and Letts threw ice and snow and put it out [...]. The Germans built a machine, and by hurling stones night and day, they broke down the fortified

⁴⁷ Henry of Livonia, ch. XXIII.8, p. 163: *Erigitur tandem machina maior, iactantur in castrum lapides magni, quorum magnitudinem intuentes in castro terrorem magnem concipiunt. Fit ipse dux rector machine, proiecit lapidem primum et erkerum ipsorum et viros in eo comminuit; proiecit tertium et arbores tres magnas munitionis perforando constringit hominesque ledendo concutit. Quo viso castrenses de munitione fugiunt, loca tutiora adire querunt, sed refugium non habentes veniam petunt, ut ad episcopum descendant, supplicant* (trans. Brundage, p. 181).

⁴⁸ Rogers, *Latin Siege Warfare*, p. 265.

places and killed men and innumerable beasts of burden in the fort. Since the Estonians had never seen such things, they had not strengthened their houses against the force of such missiles.⁴⁹

Yet in spite of all the military technology available to the crusaders, much depended upon the loyalty and bravery of the individual warrior:

Arnold, a Brother of the militia, labored there day and night. At last he was hit by a stone and crossed over into the brotherhood of the martyrs. He was an extremely religious man and was always praying. He found, as we hope, that for which he prayed.⁵⁰

Whatever siege machines may have been used, it is this human factor that is so important, and combined with the technological descriptions, reveals the true nature of thirteenth-century siege warfare. The chronicle of Henry of Livonia therefore contains much valuable material about siege work and siege weaponry that can now be explained in the wider context, and we are indebted to him for providing such a thorough account of it.

⁴⁹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIV.11, p. 84: *Lyvones et Letti lignorum compartatione fossatum ab imo usque ad summum implent et propugnaculum superimpellunt: Letti cum balistariis desuper ascendunt, sagittis ac lanceis in munitione multos interficiunt, multos vulnerant, fit pugna maxima diebus quinque. Estonos primam struem lignorum incendere nituntur, igne copioso de castro in vehiculis misso. Lyvones et Letti missa glacie et nive extinguunt [...] Theutonici machinam instruunt nocte ac die lapidum iactatione loca munita confringunt, homines et iumenta infinita in castro interficiunt, quia Estonos talia numquam viderant et domos suas contra tales inpetus non firmaverant* (trans. Brundage, p. 106).

⁵⁰ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIV.11, p. 84: *Arnoldus, frater milicie, ibidem nocte et die laborans, tandem lapide proiectus in martyrum consorcium transmigravit, Qui erat vir valde religiosus et semper orans, et quod oravit, hoc, sicut speramus, invenit* (trans. Brundage, p. 106).

Chapter 16

The Significance of the Local Baltic Peoples in the Defence of Livonia (Late Thirteenth–Sixteenth Centuries)

Kaspars Kļaviņš

Up to the present, the immigrant Western (predominantly German) clerics, soldiers and traders have been regarded as the main agents in the Baltic Crusades, while the native peoples of the eastern Baltic region have generally been considered as the objects of these events. This is equally true of Western scholars, as well as of those from the Baltic countries today. The history of Livonia has been associated with various myths and stereotypes, originating in the eighteenth and even more so, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. When they think of the Middle Ages today, many people in Latvia or Estonia picture aggressive German invaders who enslaved the native peoples, turning them into a homogeneous, subordinate, inferior peasant underclass. This myth began to emerge among Baltic German writers of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment who saw their mission in the struggle for the abolition or reform of serfdom among the Livonian peasants, which they considered to be slavery. They contrasted the German clerics, traders, townspeople, crusaders and knights of the Teutonic Order with the ‘innocent nature-children’: Latvians and Estonians. In a sense they regarded the Baltic local people as an embodiment of the ideal of the noble savage propounded by Jean-Jacques Rousseau.¹

Later Baltic Germans also saw an advantage in this theory, in order to substantiate their mission as ‘culture-bearers’ (Ger. *Kulturträger*) for the local peoples.² By contrast, Latvian and Estonian national romanticists in the nineteenth

¹ Kaspars Kļaviņš, ‘The Baltic Enlightenment and Perceptions of Medieval Latvian History’, *JBS* 29 (1998), 213–24 (here 220). See also G.H. Merkel, *Die Letten vorzüglich in Liefland am Ende des philosophischen Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig, 1797); K.Ph.M. Snell, *Beschreibung der russischen Provinzen an der Ostsee. Oder: Zuverlässige Nachrichten sowohl von Rußland überhaupt, als auch insonderheit von der natürlichen und politischen Verfassung, dem Handel, der Schiffart, der Lebensart, den Sitten und Gebräuchen, den Künsten und der Literatur, dem Zivil- und Militairwesen, und andern Merkwürdigkeiten von Livland, Ehistland und Ingermannland* (Jena, 1794); H.J. Jannau, *Geschichte der Sklaverey und Charakter der Bauern in Lief- und Ehistland Ein Betrag zur Verbesserung der Leibeigenschaft. Nebst genausten Berechnung eines Lieflandischen Haakens* (Riga, 1786).

² For more on *Kulturträgertheorie*, see Kurt Villads Jensen, ‘Introduction’, in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, ed. Alan V. Murray (Aldershot, 2001), pp. xvii–xxv (here xxiv).

century also accepted the same myth as an argument in social and economic competition with the Baltic Germans (especially the landed gentry), since it served to support their view of the Germans' 'illegal' and 'immoral' status in Latvia and Estonia. During the years of independence in Latvia and Estonia in 1918–40, more detailed studies of Livonian social history were produced by Latvian and Estonian historians (including Baltic Germans), but the Soviet occupation in 1940 put an end to this development. Under the fifty years of Soviet rule the old myth of German aggressors and Latvian and Estonian victims was adopted, as it satisfied the needs of the Soviet propaganda quite well, and no paradigm had to be changed under the new conditions, since (ironically) these views coincided fully with the earlier ideology of Latvian and Estonian national romanticism. More serious study of Livonian history continued only in the West, where more major disputes between Latvian and Estonian emigrant historians on the one side, and Baltic German historians on the other, had faded out. However, since their work rarely appeared in English, it often remained unknown to a wider audience. Although the Baltic states have seen a great deal of development in the area of historical research since regaining their independence in 1991, comprehensive study of the Livonian period (the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries) within the context of European history has not yet been brought to full fruition.

Even though a considerable scholarly literature about the Baltic lands has now appeared in the West, much work still needs to be done on the social history of the Middle Ages. In that history, co-operation existed alongside expansion, with a symbiosis of Western and local societies alongside a transplantation of Western institutions. The aim of this chapter is to examine one aspect of this subject: the involvement of the local Baltic and Finnic peoples in the defence of Livonia, which, if viewed 'from the top', seems to have developed as a result of activities of immigrants from the West. As the subject is too broad to be dealt with in a single chapter, it should be seen as an initiative for further studies in this subject area.

In order to discuss the significance of local peoples in the defence of Livonia, we have to understand how Livonia was actually formed as a polity. Manfred Hellmann has stressed that without the consent and support of the Livs, the first bishop of Livonia, Meinhard, would have had no prospects in the eastern Baltic region.³ We must also bear in mind that a large part of the territory of Livonia was acquired not through military conquest, but according to various agreements and

³ Manfred Hellmann, 'Die Anfänge christlicher Mission in den baltischen Ländern', in *Studien über die Anfänge der Mission in Livland*, ed. Manfred Hellmann (Sigmaringen, 1989), pp. 7–36 (here 35). On the significance of the Livonian ruler Caupo, see Torben K. Nielsen, 'Mission and Submission. Societal Change in the Baltic in the Thirteenth Century', in *Medieval History Writing and Crusading Ideology*, ed. Tuomas M.S. Lehtonen, Kurt Villads Jensen, Janne Malkki and Katja Ritari (Helsinki, 2005), pp. 216–31.

that the natives themselves regarded as beneficial.⁴ I am inclined to agree with Robert Bartlett when he states:

If the Germans (or the Danes, who also invaded at this time) wished to establish hegemony in the region, they had to use local people. They needed them not only as agricultural producers, paying tribute and tithe, but also as military auxiliaries. There were not enough foreigners to support an autonomous military establishment [...]. Especially in the early days, the invaders needed local forces not only in the form of subject auxiliaries, but also as independent allies.⁵

Traditional discussions of the thirteenth-century conquest of the eastern Baltic regions often ignore regional peculiarities, forgetting that the Livs, Letts and Wends had mostly allied with the German immigrants from the start, fighting on their side and thus participating in the genesis of Livonia, particularly in connection with the wars against the Estonians. A study of the chronicle of Henry of Livonia suggests that, without the active participation (or indeed initiative) of the local peoples, the relatively swift conquest of Estonia in the early thirteenth century would not have been remotely imaginable, considering the very severe resistance and mobility of the Estonians. The evidence of this can be seen, for example, in numerous attacks of the Letts in Estonia in 1211, which resulted in the surrender of a section of the Estonians to the Catholic Church.⁶ Šterns has provided a fine survey of how native peoples participated in the military campaigns of the Catholic masters during the period of the genesis of Livonia, concluding that 'the Germans had established their rule with the active participation of native warriors in all the attacks on their major castle-mounds and their towns'.⁷

At the same time, we must understand that native peoples themselves also needed Western forces as allies in their wars. Here, co-operation at first took place according to principles of mutual benefit (let us recall the initial co-operation of Letts and Germans, for instance). In Henry's chronicle, it is clear that military expeditions take place at the local peoples' initiative, and German forces fight in their interests as allies. For instance, the campaign against the Saccalans (an Estonian tribe) in 1211 takes place at the request of Dote and Paike, the Lettish

⁴ Hellmann, *Das Lettenland im Mittelalter: Studien zur ostbaltischen Frühzeit und lettischen Stammesgeschichte, insbesondere Lettgallen* (Münster, 1954), p. 232.

⁵ Robert Bartlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change, 950–1350* (London, 1994), pp. 74–75.

⁶ Henry of Livonia, *Heinrichs Livländische Chronik*, ed. Leonid Arbusow and Albert Bauer, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarium separatim editi*, 31 (Hannover, 1955), ch. XV.7, pp. 95–96. English translations of this work given in this chapter are taken from *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia: Henricus Lettus*, trans. James A. Brundage (New York, 2003).

⁷ Indriķis Šterns, 'Iezemiešu loma Senaltvijas pakļaušanā vācu varai', *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls* 1 (2003), pp. 34–48 (here 48).

elders at Beverin. They go to Riga for this purpose and to look for support from the Sword Brethren as well as crusaders:

Dote and Paike, the elders of the Letts at Beverin, went to Riga and humbly sought aid against the Saccalians. The pilgrims rose up with the Brothers of the Militia, Theodoric the bishop's brother, Caupo with all the Livonians, and Berthold of Wenden with the Letts. They assembled a great army in Metsepole [and] marched to the sea.⁸

The Livonian elder Caupo in turn involves the Germans in his campaign into Estonia, receiving much booty as a result, including women and children.⁹ The sons of the local Lettish ruler Thalibald even brought the Sword Brethren into their own expedition to Estonia, carried out in order to avenge the death of their father.¹⁰

Although wars between the Livs and the Letts on the one hand and the Estonians on the other had ended by the end of the thirteenth century, the external enemies of the inhabitants of Livonia remained the same: the schismatic Russians and the pagan Lithuanians.¹¹ Livs, Letts and Estonians had long been forced to struggle against constant pressure from the Russian lands of Novgorod and Pskov. The Curonians, who, unlike the Letts and many of the Livs, would not peacefully join Catholic Livonia, faced mounting difficulties in their war with the Lithuanians, and here the Teutonic Knights proved to be a natural ally. Thus, the first important aspect of the significance of native peoples in the defence of Livonia is their participation in fighting as independent allies.

In descriptions of warfare the native leaders are often mentioned by name. The chronicle of Henry of Livonia mentions a number of local warlords, such as Russin of Sotekle, Waridote of Autine, and Talibald of Beverin, among others.¹²

⁸ Henry of Livonia, ch. XV.7, p. 94: *Lettorum vero de Beverin seniores Dote et Paike euntes Rigam contra Saccalanenses suppliciter auxilium postulabant. Et surgentes peregrini cum fratribus milicie et Theodericus, frater episcopo, et Caupo cum Lyvonibus universis et Bertoldus de Wenden cum Lettis, et congregantes exercitum magnum in Metsepole processerunt ad mare.*

⁹ Henry of Livonia, ch. XV.2, p. 88: *et Caupo cum quibusdam Theuthonicis et aliis sequens in Saccalam, villas multas et castra ... incendit et tollens spolia multa viros multos occidit et mulieres cum parvulis captives abducit.*

¹⁰ Henry of Livonia, ch. XIX.3, p. 125: *Tunc filii Thalibaldi ... videntes, quia mortuus est pater eorum, irati sunt contra Estones valde. Et colligentes exercitum Lettorum cum amicis et cognatis suis, et ibant cum eis fraters milicie de Wenden cum aliis Theutonicis, et intraverunt Ugauniam.*

¹¹ Regarding the thirteenth century, one can agree with Indriķis Šterns that 'The real enemies of the Germans were the Lithuanians with whom they fought many a battle': Šterns, 'Iezemiešu loma', p. 48.

¹² Henry of Livonia, ch. XII.6, p. 61: *Et factum est, postquam iam tota Lyvoniam baptizata est et Leththigallia, miserunt seniores Leththorum, Russinus de castro Sotekle, Waridote de Autine, Taibaldus de Beverin nec non et Bertoldus, frater milicie de Wenden,*

The shape and direction of subsequent Livonian wars, as well as their participants, are described in the *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* (Ger. *Livländische Reimchronik*) in the late thirteenth century. Alan Murray notes that ‘the bulk of the chronicle tells of the unrelenting struggle between the Orders, usually assisted by Christianized Livs and Letts, and their enemies’.¹³ The military techniques depicted are primarily ‘raids into enemy territory, destroying fortifications and seizing livestock and slaves, or moves to defend the Christian territories and fortresses against the pagans and orthodox Russians’.¹⁴ The military alliances between natives and Westerners in the second half of the thirteenth century are also well documented, as in the case of the campaign of 1269 against the Russian town of Izborsk:

*Der meister dô des landes nôt
den besten einen tac enpôt,
mit den er zû râte wart
zû Rûßen eine herevert.
des kuniges man des wâren vrô.
dar zû bereite man sich dô
volleclîch uber al daß lant.
daß volk gemeine wart besant,
Letten, Lîven, Eisten gnûc.
ir aller wille sie dar trûc.
der meister brâchte brûdere dar
waß er mochte an sîner schar
wol achzic und hundert dô.
des was daß volk gemeine vrô.*¹⁵

The local population fought in the Livonian army under their own banners. The *Rhymed Chronicle* tells of a unit of a hundred Letts who went to help the Teutonic Knights against the pagan Semgallians under the leadership of a brother of the Order, carrying a red-and-white banner:

nuncios suos ad Estonos in Unganiam, requirere que iusta sunt de omnibus iniuriis sibi illatis ab eis.

¹³ Alan V. Murray, ‘The Structure, Genre and Intended Audience of the Livonian Rhymed Chronicle’, in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier*, pp. 235–51 (here 241).

¹⁴ Murray, ‘The Structure, Genre and Intended Audience’, p. 241.

¹⁵ *Livländische Reimchronik*, ed. Leo Mayer (Paderborn, 1876), lines 7677–90. *The Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*, trans. Jerry C. Smith and William Urban (Chicago, 2001), p. 78: ‘Later the master told the leading men of their country’s danger and together with them decided to send an expedition into Russia. The king’s men were happy at this and made preparations throughout the land. All the natives were summoned, Letts, Livs, and Estonians, and they all came willingly. The master assembled as many brothers as he could, about one hundred and eighty. That pleased the natives.’

*Von Wenden was zû Rîge komen
 zûr lantwer, als ich hân vernomen,
 ein brüder und wol hundert man:
 den wart daß mêre kunt getân.
 die quâmen hovelîchen dar
 mit einer banier rôtgevar,
 daß was mit wiße durch gesniten
 hûte nâch wendischen siten.
 Wenden ist ein burc genant,
 von den die banier wart bekant,
 und ist in Letten lant gelegen,
 dâ die vrowen rîtens pflegen
 nâch den siten, als die man.
 vor wâr ich ûch daß sagen kan,
 die banier der Letten ist.
 der was in der selben vrist
 hundert hin zû Rîge komen
 zûr lantwer, als ir hât vernomen.
 ein brüder was in houbtman.
 sie wâren im gerne undertân.¹⁶*

We see here that the forces of the local population were led not by a local leader, but by a brother of the Teutonic Order. Judging by the later chronicles, this was an already established system by the fourteenth century.

Throughout the fourteenth century and later we can observe a continuation of these wars, in which the Livonians were forced to fight on two fronts, against Russian territories (Novgorod and Pskov) and the Lithuanian state simultaneously. Later the aggressive power of Muscovy loomed on the horizon, which ultimately would bring defeat to Livonia. Ravaging and burning were common tactics in European wars of the time, and the contemporary sources demonstrate that the acts of Lithuanians and Russians in Livonia were no different from these, and

¹⁶ *Livländische Reimchronik*, lines 9219–38. *The Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*, trans. Jerry C. Smith and William Urban (Chicago, 2001), p. 93: ‘As soon as they received word, a brother and about a hundred men came from Wenden to Riga to the land’s defense. They came in a stately manner with a red banner decorated with strips of white fur, as was their custom. Wenden is the name of their castle, and it lies in the land of the Letts. It was that country’s banner they were carrying. (It is also the custom there for the women to ride horseback just like the men.) A hundred of them were coming to Riga. A brother was their leader and they served under him willingly.’ It is regrettable that in the translation the expression ‘the Latvian banner’ (MHG *die banier der Letten*) is rendered as ‘that country’s banner’, which completely distorts the original idea. Despite the very strong anti-German feelings among the Latvian public at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, it was the evidence of the chronicle which was used to establish the national red-white-red flag which is still the official flag of the Republic of Latvia.

no less terrifying than the Livonians' invasions of neighbouring countries.¹⁷ The motivation of the local peoples to participate in such wars derived from the struggle for their own security.

Depictions of Livonia's external wars in fourteenth-century sources are richly expounded, although the material is rarely employed in scholarly literature. For example, these events are reflected extensively in the Latin-language *Chronicon Livoniae* of Hermann von Wartberge, which gives stark examples of how Teutonic Knights and natives joined forces in the fight against external enemies of Livonia.¹⁸ The chronicler tells, for example, how in 1367 Siegfried, the Teutonic commander (Ger. *Komtur*) of Goldingen (mod. Kuldīga, Latvia), together with the Curonians, pillaged and burned the district of Sare in Lithuania.¹⁹ In 1375, the bailiff of Rositten (mod. Rēzekne, Latvia) went pillaging along with 400 natives into the land of Polotsk (mod. Polatsk, Belarus), capturing prisoners and horses.²⁰ This example does not provide the name of the local people, although the essential point is evident. The obligations of officers of the Teutonic Order (in this case, the Rositten bailiff) were to maintain peace and order on their territory. The best way to ward off an enemy attack was to attack their land first. Locals could thus respect and honour successful officers of the Order at a time when setting up defences against constant invasions from Lithuanians and Russians was of the utmost importance. Thus, the claim in the chronicle of Bartholomaeus Hoeneker that the Curonians treated the Teutonic Knight Eberhard von Monheim (later Master) 'as a father' does not at all seem exaggerated. In his time, Curonia (now western Latvia) suffered no pillaging or burning raids.²¹

While thirteenth-century Livonian chronicles often name the leaders of local peoples, the situation changes drastically in fourteenth-century literature. The leaders in wartime were now mostly Teutonic Knights: commanders and bailiffs.

¹⁷ See Froissart, *Voyage en Béarn* (Paris, 1987) and Bartholomäus Hoeneker, *Die jüngere livländische Reimchronik des Bartholomäus Hoeneker (1315–1348)*, ed. Konstantin Höhlbaum (Leipzig, 1872).

¹⁸ A significant edition was recently published in Latvia, which unfortunately is not well known in wider scholarly circles. See Hermann von Wartberge, *Hermann von Wartberge Chronicon Livoniae*, ed. Ēvalds Mugarēvičs (Riga, 2005).

¹⁹ Hermann von Wartberge, p. 104: *Eodem tempore frater Siffridus, commendator in Goldingen, cum Curonibus vastavit regionem Sare et succendit, quosdam captivos educendo.*

²⁰ Hermann von Wartberge, p. 136: *Eodem anno feria ante Judic advocatus de Rositen cum IIIc vernaculis et neophitis fuerunt in terra illorum de Plotzko eam devastando, educentes LXXXVI capita utriusque sexus et C equos, in die Palmarum sani redeuntes.*

²¹ Bartholomäus Hoeneker, p. 3: *De Curen helden en [Eberhard von Monheim, K.K.] vor einen vader; dann by siner tidt leth Curlandt nenen for edder brant.* Hoeneker's chronicle has never been translated into English or modern German either. The 1872 edition contains only the Middle Low German text with commentary. An edition in Estonian was published after World War II. See Bartholomäus Hoeneker, *Liivimaa noorem riimkroonika: (1315–1348)*, ed. Sulev Vahre (Tallinn, 1960).

Of course, the sources still mention entirely independent campaigns by locals that were not supervised by the Order's officers, which were well organized and had their own leadership. However, it is obvious that the functions of former military alliances were being fulfilled ever more efficiently by the new leadership structure of Livonia, into which the local inhabitants had been integrated along with their own social structure.

In the fourteenth-century chronicle of Bartholomaeus Hoeneke we also see an entirely individualistic motivation for the local peoples to take part in military expeditions.²² For instance, one of the reasons why the Letts, Livs and Estonians marched to Izborsk in 1342 was booty, which consisted of agricultural produce:

Here the great army reached Izborsk, ... there were many Letts, Livs and Estonians, all of whom wanted to get the spoils of war. The land was devastated ... They took farm animals, bees and other goods with them to Livonia.²³

An inescapable obligation of the local population was participation in military expeditions, both in wars undertaken by local rulers before the establishment of Livonia and, subsequently, as ordered by the new authorities such as the Teutonic Order and the archbishop of Riga. At the outset, a large proportion of the neophytes among the Livs and Letts were recruited for the war with Estonia; we can thus speak of a forced military service of the Baltic peoples. For example, in 1253 Heinrich, bishop of Curonia, concluded a treaty in Goldingen with the Teutonic Knights, in which it was agreed that, whenever the rulers of the country or their representatives called for it, the Curonians had to take part in military campaigns against pagans, both in defensive as well as offensive wars, while in the case of a sudden attack they could be drafted also by a decree of the village elder; those who did not obey were subject to fines.²⁴ Similar evidence of this can be seen in the 1272 treaty between the archbishopric of Riga and the Livonian Master of the Teutonic Order on the one part, and the Semgallians on the other. Among other conditions, it provides that Semgallians should take part in military campaigns organized by the new overlords of the country.²⁵

The *Livonian Rhymed Chronicle* clearly reflects differences in motivation of various peoples who were either forced to take part in the military campaigns organized by the Germans or took part in them willingly. For example, the recently conquered Curonians refused to fight at Dorben (mod. Durbe, Latvia) in 1260 against the Samogitians, hoping that the battle would lead to the defeat of the

²² Bartholomäus Hoeneke, pp. 15, 37.

²³ Bartholomäus Hoeneke, p. 18: *Hirna quam dat grote heer vor Isborch, ... hadden darto vele Litten, Liven un Eesten de wolden alle pris inleggen. Dat landt wort alle vorwoestet beth ann de Muddouw, an vehe, korne, immen und anderm gude; dat brachten se alle inn Liflandt.*

²⁴ LUB 1/1, no. 250.

²⁵ LUB 1/1, no. 430: *unde to reisen solen sie sich willich und reit bewisen.*

Teutonic Knights, so they could fully regain their independence. Seeing this, the Estonians who had been drafted into the army likewise refused to fight:

*die Kûren hatten vor gedâcht
ein ding, daß wart vollenbrâcht
zû den selben zîten:
sie enwolden nicht dâ strîten.
eß was ein gerâten rât,
den sie volvûrten mit der tât.
sie hattenß alsô ûf gegeben:
ist, daß die brûdere daß leben
verliesen und die walstat
und ouch ir helfe wirdet mat,
sô wolle wir sunder hêrren wesen;
der dûtschen sal ouch nicht genesen
die mit uns sin zû Kûrlant.
dâ mite wichen sie zû hant.
dô daß die Eisten sâhen,
sie begunden gâhen
vaste mit in von dannen.²⁶*

By contrast the Letts and Livs, who from the very beginning collaborated with the arrivals from the West and the institutions established by them, are almost always depicted as reliable warriors who are happy to go to war together with the Germans and share with them the spoils of war or the suffering in the case of defeat.²⁷ They are often identified as Christians ('believers'), just like the Germans. The activities of the Livish leader Caupo and other episodes in the battles waged by the Letts undoubtedly served as important elements in the identity of the Catholic Livonia.

Forced labour was also required for military purposes, as can be established from various treaties with the Curonians and Semgallians concluded between

²⁶ *Livländische Reimchronik*, lines 5601–17. *The Livonian Rhymed Chronicle*, trans. Jerry C. Smith and William Urban (Chicago, 2001), p. 59: 'When both armies were ready, and battle between the Christians and the heathens was imminent, it happened that the Kurs refused to fight. They had decided this beforehand, and it was their unshakeable resolve. They argued as follows: if the brothers lose their lives and the battle, and if their allies are also defeated, then we will be without overlords. None of those Germans who are with us here in Kurland shall live! And so they withdrew, and when the Estonians saw this, they fled as well.'

²⁷ However, the chronicle of Henry also tells about an event in 1207, when Bishop Albert, after a devastating invasion by the Lithuanians, forced the Livs and Letts to take part in a military campaign against them, threatening them with a fine of 3 marks in case of disobedience. After this campaign, Germans shared with them the spoils of war. Henry of Livonia, ch. XI.5, p. 53.

1267 and 1272. Both of these peoples had to work for the Teutonic Knights for four days per year. The Curonians also had to work for one month per year on the construction of castles built by the Order (if no castles were built, then they were freed from this obligation).²⁸ The Semgallians had to take part in castle construction and road building.²⁹

One cannot claim that these duties were introduced by Germans. We may agree with Indriķis Šterns, who states that 'military service and building castles were not novelties to the natives: after the conquest the native lords who had previously required such duties from the natives were simply replaced by the Germans'.³⁰ Of course, the term 'conquest' does not apply to a large part of Livonia, begging the question of where the native lords remained. Many may have been killed in battles; many lineages may have died out because of lack of descendants, and many became Germanized.³¹

Essentially, the establishment of Livonia does not allow a basis to claim a dichotomy between natives (such as Letts and Estonians) and foreigners (Germans). The natives and the mostly Middle Low German-speaking immigrants from the West were now all 'Livonians'.³² Medieval Livonia was created by the introduction to the eastern Baltic region of several Western institutions such as the Catholic Church, feudalism, towns, military orders, new technologies and European law. By contrast, Western migrants always relied on the traditions of the local inhabitants in respect of agricultural management, the practice of warfare (as determined by the harsh climate) and castle building.³³

²⁸ LUB 1/1, no. 405: *War von den broderen ein hus vor den heiden wirt gebuwet, welike des Cristen geloven vertyet, die sal dar selves ein mant dinen bi siner eigen kost. Wannere dat man buwet, so solen si desse kost don, wannere dat man nicht buwet, so wille wi si von disser kost und von anderen alleme arbeit verdragen.*

²⁹ LUB 1/1, no. 430: *Mer to der borch buunge, und die wege to makene.*

³⁰ Indriķis Šterns, *Latvijas vesture 1180–1290* (Riga, 2002), p. 734.

³¹ Šterns, *Latvijas vesture*, pp. 734–35.

³² National differences between the German-speaking inhabitants of Livonia and the local peoples, which appeared following the Reformation, when, according to Lutheran doctrine, separate services were held for different peoples in their own languages, are another issue. Similarly, the question of 'German' and 'non-German' in medieval Livonian cities is extremely complicated, considering that the terms have been interpreted socially as well as nationally. The greatest national divide was defined at the moment that the extensive peasant class refused to Germanize during the Livonian period, entering the modern era with a national language and traditional culture.

³³ See Hellmann, *Das Lettenland*, p. 242: 'Die deutsche Landesherrschaft knüpft überall an das Vorgefundene an. Sie zerstört zunächst weder die Siedlungsformen, noch die Agrarverbänder der Letten.'

The Castle as a Nexus for the Clash of Cultures

After the creation of Livonia, castles continued to exist where the local population had previously lived, as, for example, at Zabeln, Talsen and Gerzike (mod. Sabile, Talsi and Jersika, Latvia).³⁴ Yet at the beginning of the mission in the lands of the Livs, certain castles were built in the villages of the local people with their active assistance, as at Īxküll (mod. Ikšķile, Latvia) and Holme on the island of Martinsholm (mod. Mārtiņsala, Latvia).³⁵ The castle at Īxküll originally belonged to the Livs, not the Germans, and was built at the initiative of the German missionary (later bishop) Meinhard in order to protect them against Lithuanian attackers.³⁶

The history of castles in the territory of modern Latvia and Estonia is peculiar and little studied; ironically, more thorough archaeological research on castles in Latvian territory actually took place during the period of Soviet rule. Excavations have shown that the Teutonic Knights often lived in wooden castles built according to ancient techniques used by the local peoples, even in the fourteenth century.³⁷ This period was a time of frantic castle building in Livonia, as witnessed in the chronicles of Hermann von Wartberge and Bartholomaeus Hoeneker, and local labour was crucial to this process. Hoeneker offers an extremely colourful depiction of a castle being built in Terweten (mod. Tērvete, Latvia) in 1339, intended as a buffer against Lithuanian raids on Livonia. The Livonian Master asks the officers who have arrived in Riga with many troops and rations for assistance. They all then go to Semgallia, to a hill where the planned castle is being constructed. Work takes place in a bitter cold where 'the food was frozen and so was beer in the cups'. But the construction of the castle was completed successfully, and supplied with manpower and all the essentials:

In 1339 the Master wanted to fortify the castle of Tērvete and asked commanders and bailiffs for help; they all dutifully arrived in Riga with many troops and rations. They all then went to Semgallia, to a hill where they wanted to build the castle. They were forced to work here in very cold weather, so that as soon as food was on the table, it froze into ice, and so did beer in the cups. Nevertheless, the castle was built and fortified after Christmas, staffed and supplied with necessities.³⁸

³⁴ Ēvalds Mugurēvičs, 'Zur Archäologie mittelalterlichen Burgen in Lettland', *Lübecker Schriften zur Archäologie und Kulturgeschichte* 12 (1986), 241–59 (here 244).

³⁵ Mugurēvičs, 'Zur Archäologie', p. 245.

³⁶ Henry of Livonia, ch. I.6, p. 3.

³⁷ Ēvalds Mugurēvičs, 'Latvijas viduslaiku pilsu klasifikācijas un arheoloģiskās izpētes jautājumi', *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija* 14 (1983), 3–13; Mugurēvičs, 'Arheoloģiskās liecības par Livonijas ordeņa pilsu attīstību Latvijas Teritorijā', *Arheoloģija un etnogrāfija* 16 (1994), 93–109.

³⁸ Bartholomäus Hoeneker, p. 7: *Anno 1339 gedachte der hermeister dat slott Terweten tho bevestigen, batt de cumpsters und vogede umb bystandt; de quemen gehorsamlich mit*

Many Teutonic Order castles were erected at local centres with existing earlier fortresses that Helen Nicholson so precisely describes: 'They had a defensive ditch and high fortifications, and were able to withstand a siege of several days by western Europeans.'³⁹ In this respect, Livonia's defensive system was also topographically reliant on the location of fortresses during the previous period. In this case, Terweten was exactly such a centre, long housing a pagan Semgallian fortress, and one of the major ones at that. Excavations at Teutonic fortresses have revealed Western European (German) tools and weapons (iron swords with inscriptions, oval horseshoes, massive footboards) along with traditional local tools, weapons and decorations (axes, spears).⁴⁰ These castles sheltered local inhabitants during enemy attacks, but local warriors were apparently stationed there as well. In castles of the Teutonic Order in Prussia, a permanent garrison was made up of trusted Prussian *Withinge*.⁴¹ These questions remain almost entirely untouched by research in a Livonian context.

Members of the Teutonic Knights could be knight brethren, priests or sergeants; although natives could become sergeants this does not imply that they joined en masse, but there is nothing to suggest that they did not join the Order. To be admitted as a sergeant, an oath was not required and neither parentage nor nationality was taken into account. Sergeants wore grey cloaks and were referred to as 'greys'. It was a different case with knight brethren, who mostly came to Livonia from various regions within Germany, where former ministerials (lower nobility) seized the opportunity to move up the social scale.⁴² However, even here there were restrictions in place at first, whether national or social. Only later did the Order start to admit only sons of German noblemen, but charters of the Order written in the mid-thirteenth century mention no such restriction.⁴³ Data on local people among knight brethren are simply non-existent, apart from one Liv

grotem folcke und profiande tho Rige. Also togen se mit einander in Semegallen up den berch, dar se de borch buwen wolden, leden averst groten frost unnd arbeit, dann so balde de spise up dem dische was, fror se gar tho ise, deszgeliken dat bier inn den bekern. Jodoch na den winachtendagen wort des slates wal upgeslagen, de borch bevestet und mit luiden und aller tobehor wol bevestiget.

³⁹ Helen Nicholson, *Medieval Warfare: Theory and Practice of War in Europe 300–1500* (Basingstoke, 2004), p. 74.

⁴⁰ Ēvalds Mugurēvičs, 'Wechselbeziehungen der Deutschen und Ostbaltischen Kulturen im Lettland des 13. bis 16. Jahrhunderts', *Lübecker Schriften zur Archäologie und Kulturgeschichte* 12 (1986), 229–39 (here 230).

⁴¹ Withinge: Prussian noblemen and other Prussians raised in their status as enjoying special trust were also integrated as officials into the organization of the Teutonic Knights. They were called 'Withinge' and special tables were made for their castles where they sat at mealtimes. See 'Die Chronik Wigands von Marburg', in *SRP* 2: 454–55.

⁴² Klaus Militzer, 'The Recruitment of Brethren for the Teutonic Order in Livonia, 1237–1562', in *The Military Orders*, ed. Malcolm Barber (Aldershot, 1994), pp. 270–77.

⁴³ Klaus Milizter [given as Milicers], 'Bruņinieku brāļi Vācu ordeņa Livonijas atzarā 1237–1562', *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls* 3 (1994), pp. 47–55.

named Ykemele (in the thirteenth century), about whom there is no doubt.⁴⁴ They definitely did not attain higher positions in the Order's hierarchy: the biographies of the Livonian officers of the Order are well known and there are no persons from the local peoples among them.⁴⁵

While the knight brethren were largely responsible for defensive and offensive activities along the defensive perimeters, they nevertheless required the support of a large number of armed peasants. By way of comparison, a study on the Old Prussians in the armies of the Teutonic Knights in Prussia points out that the local troops were used not only for the defence of the country but also for attacks into enemy territory, and as infantry they formed the largest part of the Order's army.⁴⁶ After the creation of Livonia at the end of the thirteenth century, the peasants had retained personal freedom, the right to seek justice, the right to own and inherit their farmsteads and the right to bear arms. Only in later centuries did a gradual reduction to serfdom begin. It is possible to say that even in the sixteenth century serfdom was not completely the norm in Livonia.⁴⁷

Since the country was in a perpetual state of war with its neighbours (not to mention internal conflicts, such as war between the Order and the city of Riga), it was vital to use peasants for military purposes. Livonia's peasant community consisted of several strata, each with its own rights and obligations. Apart from husbandmen, who worked their lands, and smallholders, there were also freeholders or yeomen, whose duties included military service.⁴⁸ Prisoners of war were for a long time used as slaves in Livonia, which was a stimulus for the peasants to capture them.⁴⁹ In this sense, the military traditions of the local peoples continued to have a great emphasis on taking prisoners.

Even at the end of the fifteenth century the native peasants could own weapons. A good account of peasant weaponry is provided in a 1492 article of Master Johann Freytag von Loringhoven where he states the rights of peasants. It mentions, among other things, that peasants may not sell the Lithuanians horses

⁴⁴ *Ritterbrüder im livländischen Zweig des Deutschen Ordens*, ed. Lutz Fenske and Klaus Militzer (Köln, 1993), p. 744.

⁴⁵ See *Ritterbrüder im livländischen Zweig Des Deutschen Ordens*.

⁴⁶ 'Excurs über die Verschreibung des Ordens für Stammpreußen in 13. Jahrhundert', in *SRP* 1: 255.

⁴⁷ Leonid Arbusow, 'Die altlivländischen Bauerrechte', *Mitteilungen aus der livländischen Geschichte* 23 (1924–26), pp. 4–5; Edgars Dunsdorfs and Arnolds Spekke, *Latvijas vesture 1500–1600* (Stockholm, 1964), p. 440.

⁴⁸ Klaus Militzer, *Die Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens* (Stuttgart, 2005), p. 86: 'Die bäuerliche Bevölkerung blieb im Allgemeinen "frei" und durfte auch Waffen tragen, war aber zu Abgaben und Dienstleistungen, auch zu militärischen Diensten, verpflichtet.'

⁴⁹ Militzer, *Die Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens*, p. 86: 'Dagegen behielt der Deutsche Orden die Gepflogenheiten bei, Kriegsgefangene zu versklaven. Sie dienten als so genannte Drellen auf den Höfen des Ordens wie der Vasallen und auch bei einheimischen Bauern und Ältesten.'

or weapons (including firearms), which means that they possessed such arms in the first place.⁵⁰ Teutonic Knights themselves sold weapons to the peasants, as witnessed in a 1341 inventory of the Goldingen commandery: *rurenenses tenetur pro equis, clippeis et sic dictis ceteris rebus*.⁵¹

During the sixteenth-century Livonian wars with Russia, Latvian and Estonian peasants played an important role in the forces of the Order, as shown in the chronicle of Balthasar Russow (1584) and the *Livonian History* of Johannes Renner (1556–61). Thus Russow describes Master Wolter von Plettenberg's preparation for battle with the troops of Ivan III of Muscovy in 1502. Besides the horsemen and German foot soldiers, several hundred peasants were also involved in this, although it is difficult to establish what is meant precisely by 'several hundred peasants'.⁵²

It is clear that the appearance of the type of soldier known as the landsknecht in Livonia did not lower the significance of peasant forces, particularly due to their mobility in a new type of military environment, where the transport of hardware was becoming ever more necessary. This is obvious from Johannes Renner's *Livonian History*, which describes a revenge invasion of Russia by inhabitants of Dünaburg (in mod. Daugavpils district, Latvia) and Rositten in 1558, with 150 horses, 80 landsknechts and 3000 peasants. The peasants were especially aggressive, eager to pay the Russians back for all the wrongs they had suffered during the Russian invasion.⁵³

Renner's chronicle offers much evidence of active or passive peasant involvement in the Livonian War (1558–83): as recruits, volunteers or out of situations of despair where they had to fight for life and property in the face of an unexpected offensive by the enemy. Let us consider some examples. On 10 February 1558, forces from Wenden (mod. Cēsis, Latvia) moved out towards Estonia, against the Russians, with 8 cannons, 103 German horsemen and 500 Lettish peasants. The peasants had back and chest protection (MLG *rugge und krevet*) and pikes (*knevel spete*).⁵⁴ On March 10 of the same year, the inhabitants of Rositten and 50 German horsemen, a few landsknechts and 'numerous' peasants

⁵⁰ Leonid Arbusow, 'Die altlivländischen Bauerrechte', p. 107.

⁵¹ *LUB* 1/2, no. 803.

⁵² Balthasar Russow, *Chronica der Provinz Lyfflandt* (Riga, 1857), p. 33: *Anno 1502. Im Augusto, hebbende Stende in Lyfflandt sick samptlick wedderümme gerüstet, unde mit 2000. tho Perden unde 1500. düdeschen Knechten tho vote, unde etliken hundert Buren mit etlikem Veldtgeschütte, ynt Velt gerücket.*

⁵³ Johann Renner, *Livländische Historien 1556–1561*, ed. Peter Karstedt (Lübeck, 1955), p. 46.

⁵⁴ Johann Renner, p. 20. The *knevel spete* of these peasants are sometimes erroneously described in historiography as fence poles, which is completely impossible, since the sources indicate that the cost of such *knevel spete* was 3½ thalers each.

staged a revenge invasion against Russia.⁵⁵ The dean of Hasenpoten (mod. Aizpute, Latvia) launched a military expedition together with 70 German horsemen and several hundred peasants (MLG *etlichen hundert buren*).⁵⁶ The diocese of Riga assembled 600 German horsemen and 3000 peasants for protection.⁵⁷ The aforementioned town of Wenden once saw the gathering of 500 landsknechts and 'several thousand peasants'.⁵⁸

At times Lettish and Estonian peasants would decide to carry on their fight against Russian invaders even if the Germans were passive, did not display initiative or decided to withdraw. This may be explained by the excessive cruelty of Russian forces against civilians and by the difficult circumstances of the Livonian War, where people's lives and safety depended solely on their capacity for self-defence. Unlike the landsknechts, peasants could not simply disappear, for leaving the land to settle down to an urban life was a serious prospect. Equally, sheltering in the thick of the forest was no long-term solution. Thus, peasants would often be left with no other recourse but to fight the invaders with everything they had. This is documented, for instance, in the chronicle describing the defence of the castle of Marienhausen (mod. Viļaka, Latvia). The chronicler states that, once the Russian forces had besieged the castle, the Germans showed no interest in protecting it; seeing as it had been promised to the king of Poland anyway, they had seen no point in protecting the castle and left it for the most part (only seven of the Germans remained). Nevertheless, the Lettish peasants displayed great resistance, and held the castle by 'throwing rocks'.⁵⁹ The Estonian peasants, in turn, killed thirty Russian attackers, with one peasant killing five on his own.⁶⁰

What was the peasants' military organization like? We can obtain certain data on this from Renner's chronicle. With regard to mobilization, it mentions landlords having to go to war, taking with them one out of every three men capable of wearing armour, as horsemen or footmen. The recruits were to be assigned their own banners and located in a separate camp. They would be led by landsknechts who knew their language.⁶¹ Thus, it is clear that the chronicle is talking about local Baltic peoples who did not speak German. This regulation came into effect

⁵⁵ See Johann Renner, p. 22: *Den 10. Martii toegen dye Rositers mit 50 perden und etlichen knechten sampt velen buren in Ruszlandt.*

⁵⁶ Johann Renner, p. 28.

⁵⁷ Johann Renner, p. 40.

⁵⁸ Johann Renner, p. 45.

⁵⁹ Johann Renner, p. 72: *Disser tidt quemen ock die Russen vor Marienhusen, im stift Rige an der Russen grentze belegen, sageden dat strickitt entwey und wolden dat hus innemen. Nu weren baven 7 Dutschen up dem huse nicht, dan dewile dat hus dem koninge ock scholde ingedahn werden, so weren dye Dutschen meist wech getagen. Averst dye buren deden grote were mit werpende und hielden dat hues.*

⁶⁰ Johann Renner, p. 103.

⁶¹ See Johann Renner, pp. 60–61: *Mit den buren schall idt disse gestalt hebben.*

with the decision of the Riga Landtag in 1599.⁶² What, then, were the reasons for mobilizing Lettish and Estonian peasants in vast numbers? Apparently, the same reasons that had led the Master of the Order to assign fiefs to individuals from the local peoples: the fear of opposition from the greater Livonian vassals, who had long undermined his authority. The vassals had adopted the ideals of the Reformation, which weakened Catholic Livonia from the inside, in order to assert their independence from the rulers of Livonia (the bishops and the Teutonic Order). The vassals were not entirely reliable in critical times. Thus, apart from expensive mercenaries, the rulers had to make use of peasant forces capable of fighting, which was possible due to the late onset of serfdom in the Baltic lands as well as a long-standing tradition of recruiting peasants in the war-torn Livonia. The vassals did not want to allow the peasants to fight the Russians, because they thought that they might drive out the nobility in the event of victory.⁶³ By contrast, the Livonian Master wanted to recruit peasants to come to his aid.⁶⁴ The great Livonian vassals were no doubt interested in a more comprehensive establishment of serfdom and did not want peasants who could fight. It is a paradox that the Master of the Teutonic Knights and the peasants were united in their dislike of the greater German vassals, who jeopardized both the government of Livonia and the welfare of the farmers.

It is difficult to say much about the military organization of the peasants. Edgars Dunsdorfs, on the basis of sources from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, mentions the *parob* system as a possible form of peasant mobilization: this meant a group of people who had to supply provisions or a certain number of warriors.⁶⁵ Hermann von Bruiningk and Nicolaus Busch explain the term *parob* with the Latvian word *parāds* (debt).⁶⁶ Dunsdorfs sees a link between the *parob* of the sixteenth century and the scouts or reconnoiterers who existed in fourteenth-century Livonia (especially in Curonia), pointing out that as a result of the Livonian War and the wars following it, the ancient military traditions of the Lettish peasants were lost.⁶⁷ Previously peasants had also functioned as scouts along the frontier to would alert the nearest commander of the Order of any impending assaults. As Charles Higounet emphasizes, the southern border of Livonia, threatened by pagan Samogitians and Lithuanians, was especially conducive to the Germans' recruitment of local militiamen to control the territory as scouts and guards.⁶⁸ A special tax was imposed upon peasants and vassals to

⁶² Dunsdorfs and Spekke, *Latvijas vēsture*, p. 134.

⁶³ This is evident from the Swedish envoy's message to King Gustaf I Vasa (1496–1560) in 1558.

⁶⁴ Dunsdorfs and Spekke, *Latvijas vēsture*, p. 135.

⁶⁵ Dunsdorfs and Spekke, *Latvijas vēsture*, p. 128.

⁶⁶ *Livländische Güterurkunden*, ed. Hermann von Bruiningk and Nicolaus Busch (Riga, 1908), no. 413, p. 373.

⁶⁷ Dunsdorfs and Spekke, *Latvijas vēsture*, p. 131.

⁶⁸ Charles Higounet, *Die deutsche Ostsiedlung im Mittelalter* (Berlin, 1986), p. 220.

compensate these scouts or reconnoiterers (MLG *Wartlude*, Lat. *speculatores*), as was also the case in Prussia.⁶⁹

The non-German vassals can be mentioned as the last category of the local peoples involved in the defence of Livonia. They were obliged to serve in the army of the Teutonic Knights as light cavalry. Friedrich Benninghoven writes that fiefs were granted to locals even before the Teutonic Knights, by the Sword Brethren, in order to establish a reliable warrior class.⁷⁰ Paul Johansen stressed that there are no grounds to assume that before the second decade of the fourteenth century the local Livonian population was granted less valuable fiefs than the immigrant Germans.⁷¹ However, documents also reveal that it was difficult for native vassals to retain their privileged status.⁷² During the fifteenth century, increasing pressure from German vassals ultimately ended native fiefs within the archbishopric of Riga, although this tendency was not reflected in the districts run by the Teutonic Knights. In these areas, the Livonian masters reconfirmed existing privileges by way of separate charters of liberties, and in order to retain their fiefs, numerous native vassals sought to 'Germanize' themselves through intermarriage.

There was an interesting situation concerning the so-called 'Curonian kings' (Ger. *Kurische Könige*; Latv. *Kuršu ķoniņi*) who successfully retained their feudal status throughout the Livonian period. They had hereditary titles to land, as well as hunting, fishing and milling rights. Legally, the 'Curonian kings', like the estate-holders, were subordinate to the commander of Goldingen and later the senior castellan. The 'Curonian kings' were obliged to serve in the army of the Teutonic Knights.⁷³ Johannes Renner in his *Livonian History* speaks of a Curonian king called Pennicke as a 'peasant free from any levies, leading a peasant banner during times of war, with a lion on his coat of arms'.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ Indriķis Šterns, *Latvijas vesture 1290–1500* (Riga, 1997), p. 734. Regarding the involvement of local inhabitants of Estonia in Livonian wars, see Ewald Blumfeldt, 'Über die Wehrpflichtung der estnischen Landbevölkerung im Mittelalter', in *Apophoreta Tartuensia* (Stockholm, 1949), pp. 163–76.

⁷⁰ Friedrich Benninghoven, *Der Orden der Schwertbrüder* (Köln, 1965), pp. 83–84: 'Der Orden konnte mit seinen geringen stehenden Kräften nicht alle Anforderungen bewältigen. Schon früh ist die Ordensleitung daher dazu übergegangen, sich unter den Einheimischen eine Schicht zuverlässiger Dienstmänner heranzubilden [...]. Solche kleinen Dienstlehen, die den Belehnten zu bestimmten Leistungen wie ständiger Waffenbereitschaft, Nachrichtendiensten oder ähnlichen verpflichten konnten, hat es sicher schon damals mehrere gegeben.'

⁷¹ Paul Johansen, *Siedlung und Agrarwesen der Esten im Mittelalter. Ein Beitrag zur estnischen Kulturgeschichte* (Dorpat, 1925), p. 11.

⁷² Indriķis Šterns, 'Lēņa tiesības un nevācu vasaļi Latvijā', *Archīvs* 2 (1975), 47–92.

⁷³ 'Curonian kings' feudal books published in Arveds Švābe, 'Kuršu ķoniņi un novadnieki', in *Straumes un avoti* (Lincoln, Nebr., 1962), pp. 237–48; see also *LUB* 1/11, no. 328.

⁷⁴ Johann Renner, pp. 266–67.

The 'Curonian kings' were traditionally understood to be the residents of the seven villages in Curonia (Latv. Kurzeme) who had received charters from the Teutonic Knights: Konini, Pliki, Kaleji, Ziemeli, Viesalgi, Sausgali and Draguni. In the census of 1863 they were counted at 405.⁷⁵ It is difficult to explain the meaning of the word 'king' in this context. It is known that in Livonia, besides the 'Curonian kings' there existed other kin of local vassals and free people, bearing the name of 'king'. One of the theories relates this to the origins of the respective kin arising from the rulers of the pagan times, who remained loyal to Livonia and therefore also kept certain status later on. All in all there is information about 11 fiefs bestowed on 'Curonian kings'.⁷⁶ Examples of their feudal books survive, for example, those for Tontegode (Toutegode, Toutegudde) in 1320 and 1333.⁷⁷

As a peculiar example of clash of cultures, it can be mentioned that although the 'Curonian kings' were subject to an officially Catholic knightly order, they continued to keep to their ancient pagan traditions. For example, they owned their own sacred forest. According to ancient tradition, hunting was carried out in this forest only once a year, at Christmas, with part of the hunting trophies given as offerings, as shown in the travel description by Gillebert de Lannoy from 1414.⁷⁸ In 1586 the German traveller Reinhold Lübenau witnessed the 'Curonian kings' hunting in the 'sacred forest'.⁷⁹ This 'sacred forest' is even mentioned in the feudal book issued by Order Master Wolter von Plettenberg to Curonian King Dragon: 'And according to this charter we enfeoff to Dragon and to all his true heirs ... land ... in Goldingen commandery ... which spreads up to the sacred forest, called Elkewalke'.⁸⁰ The name of the forest (*Elkewalke*) is interesting: in Latvian *elks* means 'idol', which undoubtedly points to the sacral nature of this place in the pre-Christian religious mentality.

It should also be mentioned that an important peculiarity of the vassals of non-German origin was that they did agricultural work on their land, before the German vassals started doing the same en masse.⁸¹ This tendency of native Livonian vassals to engage in agriculture at an early stage in history, as well as their strict adherence

⁷⁵ Sandis Laime, 'The Sacred Groves of Central Courland in Diachronic Aspect', *Holy Groves around the Baltic Sea: International Seminar Abstracts* (Tartu, 2007), p. 6.

⁷⁶ Švābe, 'Kuršu ķoniņi', pp. 150–51.

⁷⁷ *LUB* 1/2, no. 671, p. 753.

⁷⁸ Dunsdorfs and Spekke, *Latvijas vēsture*, p. 626: Švābe, 'Kuršu ķoniņi', p. 229.

⁷⁹ Dunsdorfs and Spekke, *Latvijas vēsture*, p. 626.

⁸⁰ *LUB* 2/2, no. 589: *und verlent heben, increafft unnd macht dusses breves gonnen unnd verlenen Draggun und alle sinen rechten erven twe hakenn landes im gebede unnd kerspel to Goldingen in dusser nagescreven schedung gelegenn: interste antogaende an enen hilligen busche, genomt Elkewalke.*

⁸¹ Edgars Dunsdorfs, *Muižas* (Melbourne, 1983); Dunsdorfs and Spekke, *Latvijas vēsture*, p. 231.

to ancient tradition, became grounds for their marginalization.⁸² At the same time, such fiefs of local non-Germanized vassals probably disappeared because of enmity of Germans and the envy of local peasants.⁸³ As a typical example, we could mention the case of a certain Hennick, who complained to the Land Marshal of the Order that members of the Teutonic Knights often attacked him. The Land Marshal, as a prudent politician, confirmed and guaranteed the feudal rights of this Hennick.⁸⁴

Conclusions

We can conclude that the significance of Baltic peoples as independent allies in the defence of Livonia, under the leadership of their local leaders, began in the thirteenth century, before the borders of Livonia had been fixed. During that time, the peoples loyal to the Western institutions (such as the Livs and Letts) supported operations carried out by the archbishop of Riga and the military orders, and participated in campaigns against the other Baltic and Finnic peoples which had not yet been incorporated in Livonia, as well as against the future 'external enemies', the Russians and Lithuanians. From the end of the thirteenth century, when the internal wars ended, they took part in the defence of Livonia as partially independent allies, even as late as in the fourteenth century. Meanwhile, the integration of natives in the power structures brought from the West also grew in importance. The commanders and bailiffs of the Teutonic Knights were the main organizers of military campaigns, while the chronicles of the time no longer feature the names of the local individuals as military leaders. By this time, the leadership of military campaigns was fully taken over by the new overlords of Livonia: the bishops and the Teutonic Knights.

From the very beginning, the locals also had to perform forced labour duties for military purposes, such as the construction of castles, roads and bridges, all of which continued. The castles became peculiar centres of the clash of cultures, where Germans as well as local soldiers and peasants from the vicinity took refuge in times.

Armed peasants kept their significance in the defence of Livonia until as late as the sixteenth century, when Lettish and Estonian peasant armies were used because of their easy mobility under the new military conditions. Thanks to the late onset of serfdom, a rather complicated structure of peasant society emerged in Livonia, whose upper layer (the freemen peasants) had to perform military service. The non-German vassals, who were granted fiefs from the very beginning

⁸² Other local vassals are known apart from the 'Curonian kings', e.g. Pytkeyanne, Jacopp Stalknecht, Manegint, Johanne Cirkant, Symon Tayte, Johannes Lyve: Šterns, 'Lēņa tiesības', pp. 47–92.

⁸³ Šterns, 'Lēņa tiesības', p. 85.

⁸⁴ *Livländische Güterurkunden*, no. 391, p. 353.

of the emergence of Livonia, also kept their military role for a long time, although they became Germanized as time passed, or merged with the peasant strata, losing their superior status.

The Eastern Baltic Lands in the Age of the Crusades: A Select Bibliography of Publications in English

Compiled by Alan V. Murray

This is an updated version of the bibliography that first appeared in *Crusade and Conversion on the Baltic Frontier, 1150–1500*, ed. Alan V. Murray (Aldershot, 2001), pp. 277–85, whose main aim was to list the most important works that are accessible to English-speaking readers, particularly for the purposes of university teaching. The original emphasis was on publications appearing between the years 1945 and 2000, and this updated version carries on this aim up to 2008. The restriction to English-language publications is not meant to devalue the great number of relevant studies in German, French, and the various Baltic, Scandinavian, Slavic and Finno-Ugrian languages, but it would be difficult and invidious to try to accommodate any representative selection of these in the space available in the present work.

A useful entry point to the non-English literature can be found in Christiansen, *The Northern Crusades* (see section 1 below). The principal bibliography on the Teutonic Knights is K.H. Lampe, *Bibliographie zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens bis 1959* (Bad Godesberg, 1975), with an update by Udo Arnold, ‘Deutschsprachige Literatur zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens 1980–1985’, *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung* 14 (1987), 194–227. For current periodical literature on all aspects of the medieval Baltic region, consult the *International Medieval Bibliography* (Leeds, 1967–), published semi-annually in print and four times a year online.

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